

TWO LECTURES
ON THE
WESLEYAN HYMN-BOOK,

WITH TABULATED APPENDIX OF THE HYMNS,
AND THEIR RESPECTIVE AUTHORS.

BY THE
REV. JOSEPH HEATON.

EIGHTH EDITION,
REVISED AND ENLARGED.

Published by Request.

"It was a necessary condition of the Evangelical Reformation of the eighteenth century, that an improved Psalmody should be provided."—ABEL STEVENS, LL.D.

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1872.

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

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P R E F A C E .

THE following Lectures were prepared and delivered for the choir of Bradford-street Chapel, Birmingham. The repetition of them was requested for sundry objects connected with Belmont-row, New Town-row, Islington, and Bristol-road Chapels, in the same town. They are printed with the hope of doing some good, especially to that class of our people who greatly admire their Hymn-book, but who have not given much attention to its interesting and diverse associations.

The author is indebted to numerous sources for many things which these Lectures contain : in addition to general biographical reading, he would particularly name the excellent works of Mr. Creamer, Mr. Burgess, and Mr. Kirk ; the Rev. T. Jackson's *Life of C. Wesley* ; also, the *Histories of Methodism*, by Drs. Smith and Stevens.

An occasional abruptness, arising out of a determined brevity, the writer hopes will be forgiven, as well as other defects of style.

For the very rapid sale of former editions—numbering seven thousand copies—the author expresses his grateful acknowledgments,

Bolton, July, 1872.

As I said before, I know no such specimen of pure, primitive piety,—or, rather, of Scriptural united piety,—except in our Liturgy.—ALEX. KNOX on *Wesley's Hymns. Remains*, vol. iii., p. 225.

"Jesu, lover of my soul," is of itself amply sufficient to stamp its author, had he written nothing else, with the character of a hymnist of the highest class.—*Oxford Essays, by Members of the University*, 1858, p. 150.

The contributions of the Wesleyan Hymnology have been so rich, as to leave the Christian world under an obligation which cannot be paid so long as there is a struggling Christian brotherhood to sing and be comforted amid the trials of this world. Charles Wesley was peculiarly happy in making the Scripture illustrate Christian experience, and personal experience throw light on the deep places of the Bible.—HENRY WARD BEECHER. *Plymouth Collection of Hymns*: New York, 1858.

It is a fact that but one writer of hymns of standard excellence has appeared since the days of the Wesleys,—namely, James Montgomery.—*American Quarterly Review*, July, 1863.

There is scarcely anything which takes so strong a hold upon the people as religion in metre. Every one, who has experience among the English poor, knows the influence of Wesley's Hymns. Often the simple recurrence of a rhyme is sufficient: the spell seems to lie in that.—*Collection of Hymns*, by FREDERIC WILLIAM FABER, D.D., Priest of the Oratory of St. Philip, Neri, 1862.

Of works more strictly original, besides sermons and pamphlets innumerable, the most noticeable are his Notes on the New Testament, and, above all, the Wesleyan Hymn-book, to which he (Wesley) was a large contributor; though the best and the finest hymns (unsurpassed in the English language) are those of his brother Charles.—*Edinburgh Review*, Jan. 1872, p. 75.

THE WESLEYAN HYMN-BOOK.

LECTURE I.

POETRY is a creative art, as the term indicates.* By the mysterious operations of mind, the poet creates images of things, and then puts them into shape. It is also the language of emotion,—the expression of the soul's deep and occult feelings. Hence, poetry takes many forms. In "*the human face divine*" we have oftentimes the sublimest poetry,—the eye, the brow, the mouth,—every feature expressing the soul's secret workings. There is poetry in *pictures*; and sometimes the rough etchings of genius are the most poetical. A fine specimen of this class, representing the sad death of England's great Indian Hero, was published a few years back in our periodical literature. A plain coffin, nearly covered with a thick, black pall; by its side, the British lion, laid down, his head resting heavily on the coffin's lid,—the eyes closed—a tear dropping from each. On that gloomy symbol of death one word was inscribed,—but one,—HAVELOCK!—the poetic expression of a nation's deep grief. What associations were at once called up—Lucknow, Cawnpore, "the ladies and the babies!" There is poetry in *music*,—whose marvellous combinations express the mind's comic, tragic, merry, melancholy moods. But poetry commonly takes the form of *words*,—of spoken or written language. Hence, we have books of poetry from the Bible—the richest of all poetic treasures,—down to the veriest literary drivelling. The Scriptures contain every order of poetry, higher wrought and perfected by the inspiration of

* ποιέω,—to make, to form, to create.

the Almighty. The book of Job is a magnificent *epic*. In *didactic poetry*, nothing can surpass Solomon's Ecclesiastes and Proverbs. As to *elegy*, David's lamentation over Jonathan is confessedly unrivalled. The twenty-third Psalm is an inimitable *pastoral*; while the *lyrics* and *triumphal odes* of the Bible supply to music its widest scope and range. But of all poetry, precedence has been claimed for *devotional lyrics*; inasmuch as the noblest exercise of the intellect is to bring the mind into direct communion with God and with spiritual things. The lyric literature of the Bible, of course, ranks immeasurably above all other: we may be pardoned if we place our own Hymn-book next.

The Wesleyan Hymn-book, as the title states, is "A Collection." Its contents are taken from no less than twenty-four different hymnists, all of high order.

THE POETS OF THE HYMN-BOOK;—in our classification of which we begin with—

1. *The Lady Poets*.—MISS STEELE, the daughter of a venerable Baptist minister who, in 1757, had the pastoral charge of a village congregation at Broughton, in Hampshire. She was a delicate, fragile creature, who struggled hard with life and for life; a lovely specimen of the intellectual and spiritual. While to some it is a dishonour and a crime to be rich, to others it is the greatest honour to be poor. Miss Steele's poems (collected in a little book, and presented with touching associations to her beloved father) were of very high order. "If," she humbly said, "you think them capable of affording pleasure or profit, you may, if you please, communicate them to friends or fellow Christians. And if, while I sleep in the silent grave, my thoughts are of any real value to the meanest of the servants of my God, be the praise ascribed to the Almighty Giver of all grace." In her life struggle the Divine statutes were her song and solace: in them she meditated through the dark watches of the night. To this lovely but lowly lady we are indebted for the exquisite hymn on the Holy Scriptures:—

“Father of mercies, in Thy word
What endless glory shines.”

She died in 1778, after being nearly all her lifetime a member of her father's church. The following lines, composed by her nieces, are inscribed on her tomb:—

“Silent the lyre, and dumb the tuneful tongue,
That sang on earth her great Redeemer's praise;
But now in heaven she joins the angelic song
In more harmonious, more exalted lays.”

MRS. AGNES BULMER composed the hymn “On laying the foundation-stone of a Chapel”:—

“Thou who hast in Zion laid
The true foundation-stone.”

It was written at the request of Mr. James Wood, of Grove House, Manchester, and sung on laying the foundation-stone of Oxford-road Chapel, in that city. Mrs. Bulmer was one of the elect ladies of Methodism, of whom we have had a long ancestral line,—beginning with Mrs. Susanna Wesley, to whom for the godly rearing of her sons this country and the world are laid under obligation never yet estimated; Lady Elizabeth and Lady Betty Hastings, Lady Maxwell, Lady Fitzgerald, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Hester Ann Rogers, Mrs. Mortimer, Mrs. Bulmer, &c., &c., honourable women not a few.

2. *Poets from the Local Preachers.*—JOHN BAKEWELL was one of the earliest and the oldest of this class. In 1748 he began to preach. Eighty years he adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour by a holy and laborious life. Seventy years he was a preacher, and by him Methodism was introduced into many parts of Lancashire. He composed that exquisite lyric:—

“Hail! thou once despised Jesus:
Hail! thou Galilean King.”

ROBERT CARR BRACKENBURY, of Raithby Hall, was another local preacher. When young, and while at the University of Cambridge, he was converted to God. Soon he cast in

his lot with the sect everywhere spoken against, and became one of Mr. Wesley's most intimate friends,—often standing by him when preaching in the streets. “At Horncastle,” Mr. W. says in his *Journal*, “the wild people were more quiet; I suppose, because they saw Mr. B. standing by me, whom they knew to be in the Commission for the Peace for this part of the county.” He accompanied our great founder to Holland and to Scotland, and was the first preacher sent by him to the Channel Islands. At Jersey he hired a house, and, under God, established Methodism there, whence it extended to France and other parts of the Continent. He followed Mr. W. to the grave. To this excellent man is attributed part, at least, of our beautiful Whitsuntide hymn:—

“Come, Holy Spirit, raise our songs,
To reach the wonders of the day.”

Mr. B. was one of the gentry of Methodism,—of whom, as of ladies, we have a noble ancestry. We might commence with Lord Dartmouth, the noble friend of our persecuted fathers; Mr. Butterworth and Mr. Thomas Thompson, the Methodist Members of the House of Commons,—onwards through a long line. In every place, among “the local brethren” have been found some of the most honoured men in Methodism; indeed, without this class of disinterested workers, the operations of our evangelistic machinery must, in many districts, have ceased. Great has become the multitude of these preachers; and not only to the towns, villages, and hamlets of our own country, but to the ends of the earth their sound has gone forth. It was a local preacher who preached the first Methodist sermon in America, in the West Indies, in Africa. When Mr. Shaw was pushing his way through Albany, he found a local preacher who had commenced preaching in his own house.

3. *Poets from the Methodist Ministry.*—WILLIAM MACLARDIE BUNTING was the last of the poets who contributed to our Hymn-book,—a gentleman of most accomplished mind,—a

preacher and poet of very high class. An elegant person and manner; "a still small voice," but sweet and very musical; great theological knowledge; a refined taste; a genial and sympathetic nature, with a most delicate play of the imagination,—combined to render him an able and attractive minister, especially to the educated classes. Growing infirmities, however, compelled his retirement from the full duties of his high and beloved calling. Seventeen years were spent in the quieter sphere of supernumerary life. Still, he preached as his strength allowed, and further occupied his time in promoting various religious and charitable objects, particularly those connected with "The Evangelical Alliance," of which he was one of the earliest and most prominent members. The precious gift of sacred song, too, was exercised to great usefulness. Many of the finest poetical pieces that have enriched the pages of "our Magazine" were the productions of his elegant pen. To Dr. Leifchild's collection of hymns he was a contributor, and the "Memorials" of this honoured minister embody and perpetuate many specimens of poetic genius altogether unique. Mr. Bunting composed, in his early days, the well-known Covenant Hymn:—

"O God, how often hath Thine ear
To me in willing mercy bowed."

He died suddenly at Kentish Town, London, November 13th, 1866, strongly declaring his faith and hope in Christ. He "fell on sleep" in perfect tranquillity. Devout men, in large number, from many churches, carried him to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. The writer of these lines, some time ago, saw two entries in a lady's album, on the same page, one immediately under the other, thus:—

"My life of mercies crown—
With a—*peaceful* end."

JABEZ BUNTING.

"The glory of children is their fathers."

W. M. BUNTING.

BENJAMIN RHODES.—He found peace with God, when eleven years old, and was half a century in the ministry. After a life of hard labour, he died as a child lying in the arms of his father. He long longed for heaven, and composed that very favourite hymn:—

“Jerusalem divine !
When shall I call thee mine,
And to thy holy hill attain ;
Where weary pilgrims rest,
And in thy glories blest,
With God Messiah ever reign ?”

The hymn preceding was also composed by Mr. Rhodes, of whom a biographical sketch may be found in the Methodist Magazine for 1815.

THOMAS OLIVERS,—commonly called “Tommy Olivers.”—Methodism raised him from the dunghill, and placed him among the princes of her people. He was brought up amongst the most degraded of mankind, and learned to swear from a dreadful man who used to combine some twenty or thirty words into one appalling blasphemy. Too much imitative talent, in this case, Olivers displayed: he outdid his tutor, and became so wicked that the very wicked themselves rebuked him. Fourteen nights in sixteen he was out of bed, during a long drunken frolic. Brought to wretchedness by indolence and vice, he went to hear Whitfield preach at Bristol. The chapel was so crowded he could not get in, therefore he resolved at the next service to be soon enough: he was there some three hours before time. The great orator drew the bow at a venture, when away went the arrow to poor Oliver’s inmost heart. He was like a stricken deer. From that hour he became a new man. A thoroughly reformed rake, he now set to work (as shoemaker) in good earnest, that he might pay off debts which he had contracted wherever he could. Journey after journey he took to settle these old scores,—on one occasion going a great distance to adjust an obligation of sixpence. This

is the man whose character Methodism so exalted that he became an admirable preacher,—an intimate friend and travelling companion of Mr. Wesley, a powerful controversialist, editor of our Magazine,—a great poet. By him our Hymn-book is enriched with one of the grandest lyrics that was ever composed, and which he adapted to a Hebrew melody heard in the Jews' synagogue:—

“The God of Abraham praise.”

4. *Poets from Dissenting Divines.*—ISAAC WATTS, the greatest hymnist but one that this country has produced. He was born at Southampton, where his father, a schoolmaster, was imprisoned for Nonconformity. When a baby, his mother often took him with her and sat on a stone near the prison where her husband was incarcerated. No wonder that the son grew up a rigid Nonconformist. Once, when a boy, he complained that the hymns at the meeting-house were so poor; when his father, not liking his son's fastidiousness, told him to make better before finding fault again. The lad did so. Thus Watts commenced hymn-making, and from 15 to 50 years of age, he tells us, he was versifying. Soon after taking Dr. Chauncey's Church, his health being impaired, he accepted an invitation to Abney House, for a week's change of air: pursuing his poetic and literary studies, he remained thirty-six years, and died there. It is certainly strange, that the author of *Divine Songs for Children*—the little book which has influenced more young minds to goodness than any other—never had a child of his own, and, therefore, never experienced the profound and unutterable emotions of the parental nature. Watts lived and died unmarried. Once he made a matrimonial advance to a lady (Miss Elizabeth Singer, afterwards the celebrated Mrs. Rowe), who much admired him for his piety and talents; but he was little in stature, insignificant looking, unprepossessing, and her reply was severe and conclusive,—“However much she admired the jewel, she could not admire the casket which

contained it." We have 66 of Dr. Watts's hymns in our book.*

"O God, our help in ages past," is said to be his finest paraphrase;—"When I survey the wondrous cross," his finest hymn. The most beautiful—on heaven—he wrote in early life, when sitting on an elevated spot, at Southampton, as it is supposed, on a fine spring day. The place is yet pointed out. The Isle of Wight was seen in the far distance, like a paradisiacal panorama, and the river Itchen, embanked by "sweet fields," flowed before him. With such a prospect he wrote:—

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers:
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
That heavenly land from ours.

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dressed in living green:
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between.

"But tim'rous mortals start, and shrink
To cross this narrow sea,
And linger, shivering, on the brink,
And fear to launch away.

"Oh! could we make our doubts remove
Those gloomy thoughts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unclouded eyes:

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor Death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore."

PHILIP DODDRIDGE was another Dissenting hymnist.—
Some beautiful hymns, which are constantly sung by us,
were composed by him:—

* See Appendix,—WATTS.

"God of my life, through all my days:"

"Lord of the Sabbath, hear our vows;"

"O happy day that fixed my choice;"

"See Israel's gentle Shepherd stand;"

and six more.* Doddridge supplies a striking instance of the power of maternal influence, and of its posthumous results. It is well known that his mother taught him Scripture truth by means of some Dutch tiles that overhung the mantelpiece of the house in which she lived. Upon these tiles Bible stories were impressed, so that he was instructed through the eye as well as the ear. In consequence, he grew up to be a great and good man; more, he became a minister, and the teacher of ministers. He wrote books: among others,—*The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. Let the stream of usefulness be traced in just one direction. This book was taken up by Wilberforce, to kill half an hour. It was the means of turning him from dissipation to God; after which he was, to a great extent, the means of the emancipation of about a million slaves in our West India Colonies. Wilberforce also wrote books:—*The Practical View of Christianity*. This work was read by an unconverted clergyman, and was instrumental to his salvation. In turn, he also wrote books: among others,—*The Dairyman's Daughter*: a beautiful story of a Methodist servant girl, of the Isle of Wight. That little book is known wherever the English language is spoken. It has been translated into other languages, and has been the means of the conversion of hundreds of souls. Thus the stream of usefulness runs on, widening and deepening. Its spring was in Doddridge's mother instructing her child in Scripture truth from those Dutch tiles. Does she know of these cumulating results? If not, she will know; and what a heaven of joy from such surprisal of usefulness! O! how

* See Appendix,—DODDRIDGE.

many such ecstatic surprisals will there be when the day shall declare conversions,—thirty, sixty, a hundredfold, from one. “In the morning sow thy seed.”

JOSEPH HART was another poet whom we may place among the Dissenting class.—When a blasphemer and injurious, he often ran to the Tabernacle and to the chapel in Tottenham-court, where deep impressions were made. Converted to God, he became one of Whitfield’s preachers—very Calvinistic; but afterwards took charge of an Independent Church in Jewin-street, London. He published a highly-seasoned hymn-book, known as *Hart’s Hymns*. “This, this is the God we adore,” was composed by him; also, in strange contrast:

“Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore.”

Isaac Taylor says that Methodism saved “the *languishing Nonconformity* of this country,” reviving it from Laodiceanism and Arianism. Many of the Wesleyan ministers became Dissenting ministers, because they could not and would not endure the privations of Methodist itinerancy. Thus, as *Myles’s Chronology* abundantly shows, the leaven of Evangelicity began soon and extensively to work. Besides, at the death of Lady Huntingdon, very many of Whitfield’s chapels became Independent ones,—the preachers being thoroughly imbued with the revived spirit. And it is something remarkable, that the most eminent pastors of Dissenting Churches, down to the present time, have been directly, or by ancestral relations, connected with Methodism. We name William Jay, who got his first good in a Methodist preaching-room at Tisbury, and whose tutor, Cornelius Winter, accompanied Whitfield on his last voyage to America. John Angell James, whose mother (as Mr. Dale, his biographer, informs us) left the Dissenting meeting-house for the Methodist one, because she found there “more power, though less polish.” Dr. Leifchild, Dr. Campbell, George Smith (Poplar), Stoughton (Kensington), Parker (the Poultry, London), H. Allon, all of whom were Methodist local preachers; Dr. Raffles, Dr.

Mc.All, James Parsons (of York), related to Methodism on the maternal side, with many more. Who shall estimate the influence of "the great revival" on all Nonconforming churches? According to Dr. Watt's testimony, religion was dying out among them.

5. *Poets from the Clergy of the Church of England.*—DR. HENRY MORE wrote, "On all the earth Thy Spirit shower," &c.; also, "Father, if justly still we claim," &c. He was Fellow of Christ College, Cambridge. MR. MERRICK, Fellow of Trinity, Oxford, wrote "Far as Creation's bounds extend," &c.: he is better known as the author of a Metrical Version of the Psalms, of which this is one. TOPLADY was a clergyman, Vicar of Broad Hembury, Devon. He was one of those uncommon men who heartily co-operated with Lady Huntingdon, and travelled with her on preaching tours through many parts of England and Wales. He was one of the staunchest Calvinists of the day, and entered the arena against Mr. Wesley on that great Calvinistic controversy which brought Mr. Fletcher into the field. His language towards Mr. W. was hostile to the last. "*The Old Fox Tarred and Feathered*" was written by him, and other offensive things. It was he who (in conjunction with Sir Richard Hill) unmercifully lampooned Mr. Olivers, whose caustic ratiocination he could not endure. Enumerating Mr. Wesley's champions, he wrote thus:—

"I've 'Tommy Olivers,' the cobbler,
(No stall in England holds a nobler,)
A wight of talent universal,
Whereof I'll give a brief rehearsal:—
He, with one brandish of his quill,
Can knock down Toplady and Hill."

And verily he did so, if the testimony of our great founder may be received, who says they were never better met or matched than by this Methodistically-educated Welshman. A strange scene was witnessed at Toplady's death.—Having heard that a report was circulated of his having changed his

opinions and apologised to Wesley, he said, "Take me to the chapel!" Though a dying man, he was taken to God's house—to the altar, and there he delivered his final testimony (afterwards published) in favour of Calvinism. Mr. Wesley could not understand how such bitterness and piety could coalesce; but God is merciful to the defects of His servants. Toplady died well. "Sickness," he said, "was no affliction, pain no curse, death no dissolution;" and the beautiful sentiments of his own exquisite hymn expressed his entire self-renunciation and confidence in Christ at the last:—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

"In my hand no price I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

"While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyes shall close in death,
When I rise to worlds unknown,
And behold Thee on Thy throne :
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

Perhaps one of the highest compliments to the Hymn-book of the Wesleys was paid by Toplady, when, in preparing a hymn-book for his own congregation, he selected a large proportion from the Wesleyan book, adapting them to his own creed: poetic genius thus extorted a public acknowledgment from one who, probably, never showed respect to an Arminian in any other instance. One word more here. Montgomery says that "Toplady lighted his poetic torch at that of his contemporary, Charles Wesley." And how many of the National Clergy—if not poets—have kindled their torch at the altar fires of Methodism, and then, as in the old Greek custom of "torch-bearing," have carried the light into the surrounding darkness of British heathenism! What names we can give having Methodist associations,—Venn, Fletcher, Perronet, Romaine, Berridge, Madan, Hervey, Grimshaw, Simpson, Walker (of Truro), De Courcy, Newton,

Rowland Hill, as well as Toplady. The Evangelical party of the Church of England—"which has saved the Church of England"—owes its existence to the great modern revival. And, at this day, how many burning and shining lights in that Church may easily trace their connection with Methodism! To it they owe their dearest blessings, ancestral and spiritual, though now they may ignore or insult it. With some it is a question unsettled,—whether the direct usefulness of Methodism, or the indirect in the revival of other Churches, be greater.

"Saw ye not the cloud arise,
Little as a human hand?
Now it spreads along the skies,
Hangs o'er all the thirsty land."

6. *Poets from the Episcopacy.*—THOMAS KEN, Bishop of Bath and Wells,—one of the seven protesting bishops in the time of James. He was present at the death of Charles II., and attended the unhappy Duke of Monmouth from the Tower to the block. With Jeffreys he ventured to intercede in behalf of the hundreds of unhappy men who, after the Western Insurrection, were left at "the Bloody Assizes" by that merciless judge to be hung and butchered.* During the period of his prosperity, it is recorded that he gave nearly £4,000 to the exiled Huguenots; and, when deprived and poor, out of £80 a year he still cast his mite into the sacred treasury,—“an equal oblation in God's esteem, and not less blessed to himself.” During his adversity, Viscount Weymouth, of Longleat (now the seat of the Marquess of Bath), offered a place in his noble dwelling to the venerable exile, and there Ken, whose heart was wounded within him, received ceaseless kindness. In his spacious room at the top of Longleat mansion, he wrote hymns, sang to his viol, prayed, and died. To Weymouth he gratefully dedicated his poetry:—

* Macaulay's History of England, vol. 1, pp. 431, 624, &c.

“When I, my Lord, crushed by prevailing might,
No cottage had where to direct my flight,
Kind heaven me with a friend illustrious blest,
Who gave me shelter, affluence, and rest.”

Ken, however, is far better known as the author of the *Morning Hymn* and *Evening Hymn*. These he wrote for the boys of Winchester School, when fellow of Winchester. They were placed at the end of a little volume of prayers prepared likewise for their use,—prayers on waking and on going to rest,—before and after reading the Scriptures, &c. Very much of the good man's concern for the religious interests of the scholars this book indicates. “Do but consider,” he says, “how welcome a young convert is to God. It was to young Samuel that God revealed himself, when the word of God was precious and very rare, to show how much God honoured a young prophet; and you know that St. John, the youngest of all the disciples, is the only person of all the Twelve who was permitted to lean on our Saviour's bosom at the last Supper, as dearest to him in affection, and who is emphatically called the disciple whom Jesus loved.” How little do even great men know which of their works shall live longest after them. Volumes of poetry dedicated to Weymouth are all but forgotten; while the *Evening Hymn* and the *Doxology*,—“Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,” (which closes the *Morning Hymn*),—and which are printed at the end of that little book of prayers for the Winchester boys, are known wherever Christianity is known. And no hymn, perhaps, has exercised such an influence on the minds of people generally as Ken's *Evening Hymn*. A pleasing instance of the familiarity of the common people with it occurred at the time of the Great Exhibition, 1851. An excursion train was passing from the provinces to London, towards night. It was filled, almost entirely, with working men and their wives. In one of the carriages a bad-mouthed fellow, who would use obscene language, was sharply rebuked by a good woman. This, however, made

the offender worse; so the woman, having a sweet and powerful voice, struck up "Glory to Thee, my God, this night," &c., to a well-known tune. The other women joined her; so did the men. The strains were caught by those in the next carriage, then by those in the next, and the next, and the tongue of the wicked was silenced by a chorus of praise. A strong proof this of the favour in which religion is held by the generality of our working classes.

7. *Poets from the highest walks of Literature.*—DRYDEN was of this class. He quickly reached the heights of Parnassus, and became the leader of a new school of Poetry. At Well's Coffee Rooms he was perpetual president; as Dr. Johnson was, subsequently, of the Literary Club. So powerful was his patronage that Sir Walter Scott, in his life of Dryden, tells us that "a pinch of snuff from the poet's snuff-box was as good as a degree." He commenced life a Protestant; and one of his ancestors was a judge at Charles's trial. His first poem was composed in honour of Cromwell; but, strange to say, he turned Catholic, and, though lampooned unmercifully by the wits, he died one. Side by side with Chaucer he lies in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey. He is not the only Romanist to whom the Methodists owe "some good thing." Thomas à Kempis wrote *The Imitation of Christ*, which Mr. Wesley himself abridged; and to Dryden we are indebted for the beautiful translation of St. Ambrose's hymn :—

"Creator Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid."

ADDISON, like Dryden, was a dramatist as well as a hymnist; but the hymns composed for the Saturday papers of *The Spectator* are far more extensively known than *Cato*. He was a politician also, being, for a short time, a very inefficient Secretary of State. Neither his political, nor his literary, nor his domestic life, was helpful to his religion. He married the Countess of Warwick, and then drank deeply of the cup of domestic sorrow; and, alas! he drank

deeply of wine to drown his sorrow. Having hewn out cisterns that could not hold water, he retired to private life, and sought the Fountain of living waters. In his last hours he sent for the young Lord Warwick, that he might see how a Christian could die. Among his posthumous papers an unfinished essay on the Christian Religion was found; and his friend Tickell informs us that he contemplated a metrical version of the Psalms. We speak the highest praise of Addison when we say he wrote "The spacious firmament on high;" and,

"When all Thy mercies, O my God,
My rising soul surveys."

His hymns are lacking in the evangelical element; but we give one stanza from the last he wrote, which, peradventure, expressed, at least, his own prayerful and penitent spirit. Would that the theology were sound!

"Then see the sorrows of my heart,
Ere yet it be too late;
And hear my Saviour's dying groan,
To give these sorrows weight."

WILLIAM COWPER was a poet in the higher school of literature. Poor Cowper! He lost his blessed mother during his childhood,—the greatest loss, perhaps, which a son can sustain. Some of his most touching poetry was written in remembrance of her; for instance, when the portrait of her was sent to him:—

"O that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see.
* * * * *
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes!
* * * * *
My Mother! when I heard that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son?
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun!"

He was sent to a boarding-school, and became the victim of

the fagging system. Here, by the cruelty of a great tyrant lad, the foundation of that sad disease was probably laid from which he suffered to the close of his life. He was so afraid of him that he durst not look into the monster's face: he knew him by his shoe-buckles. Afterwards he was sent to Westminster, and, when passing through a churchyard at night, he saw a glimmering light: it was the grave-digger at his gloomy work, who irreverently throwing up a skull, like the grave-digger in Hamlet, struck Cowper's leg with it. From that time he had impressions concerning his own mortality which were never lost. He was articled to a solicitor, and at twenty-one went to the Middle Temple. Here he was soon as busy with love as with law. His fair cousin had captivated him, and the admiration was mutual. The lady's father, however, objected strongly, because Cowper was poor. "What will you do," he inquired of his daughter, "if you marry William Cowper?" "Do?" she replied, "why wash clothes all day, and ride out on the big dog at night for an airing!" He thought it best, after this, to object on the score of consanguinity, which had more weight. Lady Hesketh, Cowper's well-known correspondent, was sister to this lady. The Clerkship of the Journals of the House of Lords was offered to him, through the influence of a distinguished relative. But an examination must be passed. Morbidly distrustful, Cowper was sure he should fail in it. Nor dare he relinquish the candidature, as this would offend his patron. What to do he knew not. At length, harassed beyond endurance, he resolved—to destroy himself! Most appalling is this portion of the autobiography, as given by Southey. Once, when raising poison to the mouth, his hand became cramped and paralysed:—the phial fell. Another time he leaned the whole weight of his body on his knife, the point directed to his heart:—the blade broke. At the Tower Wharf, whither he had gone to drown himself, a man was waiting at the very spot, as if sent to meet him. Once more, he hung himself up, when three times he thought he

heard a voice saying, "'Tis over!" and became insensible. Sensibility returned, and then he thought himself in hell. The string had broken and let him down just before life was extinct; but the mark about his neck, and the coagulated blood of his eyes, proved how near to eternity he had been. Subsequently to these frightful suicidal attempts and extraordinary deliverances, he became absolutely despondent. The guilt of intended self-murder haunted him like a devil. He dreaded death more than before he desired it. Yet he could scarcely live, being

"Without one cheerful beam of hope ;"

and, alas! alas! in the valley of the shadow of madness. Strange to say, at this crisis, and against his prejudices, his brother invited a *Methodist*, named Martin Madan, to visit him. This good man sat on the side of Cowper's bed and talked to him like a brother. The plan of salvation was laid before the despairing one, with all Methodistic point and simplicity;—the universality of atonement,—God's readiness to save the vilest and the worst,—the necessity of faith, &c. He was exhorted to believe, when, in anguish of soul, he replied, "Oh, that I could!" Madan saw him no more. Soon after this interview he became insane, and was taken to an asylum. There he wrote those well-known sapphics, so frightful to read:—

"Damn'd below Judas,—more abhorr'd than he was ;
Man disavows me, and Deity disowns."

With returning health, however, reason returned. When one day walking through the grounds of his retreat, he saw a Bible on a seat: he had long cast aside his Bible hopelessly, but this he opened—to the record of Lazarus's death and resurrection. The one thing which impressed his mind was the sympathy of Christ with the distressed. Hope dawned. He opened the blessed book again,—now to that wonderful passage in the Romans, where the entire scheme of redemption is compressed into a verse or two: "Whom

God hath set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood," &c.; and all Madan's teaching came fresh to his memory. He saw, as he never saw before, through that good man's instruction, how God could be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly. There and then he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; and was made so happy in the assurance of the Divine favour, that he thought he must die for joy. Soon after he wrote this hymn :—

"What thanks I owe Thee, and what love !
A boundless, endless store,
Shall echo through the realms above,
When time shall be no more."

Such was Cowper's connection with Methodism. No wonder that in his poetical works he speaks in such respectful terms both of it and Mr. Wesley. Afterwards he went to live near John Newton, "the Methodist curate," with whom he prepared the *Olney Hymns*. It is a sort of psychological mystery that the best and most humorous pieces of this beloved poet were composed when the fit of melancholy was actually on him. To divert his gloomy spirit from preying on itself, Mrs. Unwin told him the story of John Gilpin. Happily it made him something merry; and the next morning he produced the wonderful poetic version of that ludicrous tale, which created such a sensation,—which Henderson, the great actor, read (according to Southey), at his Popular Recitations, the hearing of which made Mrs. Siddons laugh beyond measure.

"Away went Gilpin, neck or nought,
Away went hat and wig ;
He little dreamt when he set out,
Of running such a rig."

The same mind—but after a most providential deliverance from another attempt at suicide by drowning—composed :—

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform ;
He plants His footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm."

Throughout life Cowper suffered as with a nightmare of the soul; nor did deliverance come until "the mortal coil" was "shuffled off."

8. *Poets from the Wesley Family.*—Here our observations must be very brief, simply because the subject is too large to be dealt with. The Wesley family has been pronounced "the most prolific of hymnists that the world ever knew." We have one hymn by SAMUEL WESLEY, the father, preserved to us under extraordinary circumstances. When the parsonage house at Epworth was burnt down the second time, a paper was found among the relics, charred; on it were music and the hymn in question: "Behold the Saviour of mankind," &c. SAMUEL WESLEY, jun., the eldest son, was an admirable poet. Southey, in his *Specimens of the Later English Poets*, has given examples of his poetical productions. Our beautiful little Sabbath hymn he composed:—

"The Lord of Sabbath let us praise;
In concert with the blest;"

and that exquisite elegy on the death of a young lady:—

"The morning flowers display their sweets."

JOHN WESLEY had most extraordinary versatility of talent. The marvellous range of his works puts this beyond question. That one so hard-headed and profoundly logical should have had the poetic faculty, certainly showed a rare combination of endowments. Thirty-six hymns have been contributed by him,—some original,—chiefly translations. From the French, Spanish, and German, he has supplied some of the finest lyrics in our book:—*

"Now I have found the ground wherein."

"Jesus, Thy boundless love to me."

"O God, of good the unfathomed sea."

"Give to the winds thy fears."†

* See Appendix,—JOHN WESLEY.

† The history of this hymn deserves a record. It was composed by Paul Gerrhard, a German Lutheran minister of great fidelity. He had offended the king of one of

To adopt the lines of Lord Roscommon :—*

“ ’Tis true, composing is the nobler part,
But *good translation* is no easy art;
For, though materials have long since been found,
Yet both your fancy and your hands are bound :
And, by improving what was writ before,
Invention labours less, *but judgment more.*”

Mr. Wesley's judgment was wonderful, and never displayed in greater perfection than in the censorship which he exercised in the preparation of *The Large Hymn-book*. It is well for the world that Methodism submitted implicitly to him as *critic*, as well as in other things. A poetical liturgy for the million and for all ages was thus authorised, bearing the impress of a mind not only of the highest order, but signally influenced by the Spirit and Providence of God. Milner has frankly acknowledged that, if such a poet and critic had been by the side of Watts, some of his hymns would not

the petty German states, and, in consequence, lost his living. With his good wife (who was careful and troubled, like Martha) he left the place on foot. For the night they tarried at a small wayside tavern. Their prospects were very dark, and, no sooner had they entered, than the poor wife burst into a flood of tears. Her husband looked at her lovingly, and, bidding her be of good cheer and hope in God, he gave her this text for a portion : “ Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.” A little harbour was close by, and thither he went to “ make known his requests unto the Lord,” pray for his wife,—and compose a hymn. The hymn above referred to (in three parts) was composed under these circumstances, and given to the *weeping one* for her consolation. We should add that soon a horseman rode quickly up. The Duke Christian offered to settle an annuity upon him for life, enough to make him independent of his enemies. He returned.

“ Commit thou all thy griefs
And ways into His hands,
To His sure truth and tender care,
Who earth and heaven commands.

“ Who points the clouds their course,
Whom winds and seas obey;
He shall direct thy wandering feet,
He shall prepare thy way.

“ No profit canst thou gain
By self-consuming care;
To Him commend thy cause,
His ear attends the softest prayer.

“ Leave to His sovereign sway,
To choose and to command;
So shalt thou, wondering, own His wail,
How wise, how strong His hand.” &c.

* *Guardian*, No. 164.

have contained the blemishes which are now perpetuated. But not only over hymns, purely Wesleyan, did he exercise a sharp and unsparing censorship, but over *all* adopted by him for the use of his people. That others took liberties with *our* hymns he complained bitterly, and for this avowed reason—they could not mend them; yet, right or wrong, he took liberties with the hymns of other poets, and we think he *did* mend them.—*Exempli gratiâ* :—

WATTS.

“The God that rules on high,
And thunders when He please;
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas.”

WESLEY.

“The God that rules on high,
And all the earth surveys;
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas.”

But CHARLES WESLEY was the bard of Methodism,—filling up a department of service which was assigned by Providence almost entirely to him. Never has Methodism wanted men for its great departments. From John Wesley himself, whom even Buckle pronounces “the first of theological statesmen,”* down to the great ecclesiastical legislator whose mind is so deeply impressed on our entire constitution, they have been occupied by men of the highest order. Charles Wesley was born a poet. In college he would upset chairs and tables, when in poetic frenzy he hurried to write what his excited brain had wrought; and in after days, among highways and hedges, in streets and lanes of the city,—everywhere,—he was versifying. Once his horse fell upon him. It was thought his neck was broken: *this*, he records, “stopped my making hymns.” On his little grey pony he often hastened to City-road chapel-house for pen and ink, that he might transcribe, from the jottings of a little card, what he had composed in the tumultuous thoroughfares of London. In the last scene of all, sacred verse appears to exert a specially soothing and consolatory influence. Great scholars, learned divines, and others of a different class, have loved to repeat psalms and simple hymns as death

* History of Civilisation in England, vol. 1, chap. vii.

approached. We might instance Sir Walter Raleigh, Wootton (the scholar and diplomatist), Dr. Donne, George Herbert, and many, many more. In his closing hours, Charles Wesley most fittingly composed an original hymn: it was dictated to Mrs. Wesley when articulation had all but failed:

“ In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a helpless worm redeem ?
Jesus, my only hope Thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart ;
O ! let me catch a smile from Thee,
And drop into eternity.”

There are 626 hymns of Charles Wesley's in our book ;* but, so marvellous was the fecundity of his Muse that these constitute scarcely a tithe of his compositions. Mr. Kirk† tells us that his published pieces number about 4,600 ; and that, in the keeping of the Book-room, there are manuscripts which would make the total about 7,000.‡ He wrote other poetry besides hymns ; all, however, was consecrated. “ No man was ever made worse by a single line of his verse.”—*Uni æquus virtuti.*

9. There are one or two hymns in our book from *unknown writers*. The ludicrously inappropriate use of one of these may have saved the lives of a party of preachers, a few years back, at the Shetland Islands. They had gone out for their appointments by boat, and, at sea, were in the utmost peril. Exhausted by labour, and expecting a watery grave, it was agreed they should sing a hymn ; when, with great simplicity, one of them gave out,

“ Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing,
Bid us all depart in peace.”

The whole party, with one exception, burst into a fit of laughter: dangerous as was their condition, it was irrepressible. This produced a reaction, and, as though in-

* See Appendix,—C. WESLEY.

† Lecture on C. Wesley.

‡ Many of these have been published in the Poetical Works of C. Wesley, edited by Dr. Osborne.

spired with new vigour, they took to the oars afresh and rowed safely to land. William Webb, a noble volunteer to Shetland, was of that party. But how often has the same hymn been sung at the close of a class-meeting, love-feast, or preaching, with a fervour peculiarly belonging to it: and, as the time of our departure over the sea of death may draw nigh, a very fitting prayer it will be:—

“Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing,
Bid us all depart in peace.”

THE HISTORY OF THE HYMN-BOOK, AND ITS HISTORIC ALLU-
SIONS.

The practice of sacred music must be dated very far back. Miriam's Song and the Psalms of David are a sufficient confirmation of this. The early Christians derived some of their music from the Jews; and it is said that the well-known tune “Leoni” has a history remote as the Babylonish captivity. In the primitive church we are sure both psalms and hymns were employed; and it is well known that Pliny speaks of the early Christians singing a hymn to Christ as God. Dr. Burney (History of Music) quotes from Justin Martyr, in the second century, on celebrating God's praises in psalms and hymns. Popery, however, discountenances what the Apostle has enjoined; hence, with the power of the Papacy, hymn singing declined, but was just as certainly revived with the Reformation. It was related by Seckendorf that one day Luther was affected to tears by hearing a blind beggar sing a hymn by Paul Speratus on God's free grace, and, at once, he resolved to employ this means for the propagation of his doctrines among the people. In church music the great reformer soon effected a complete revolution. He composed hymns himself,—wrote music to them,—“The Old Hundred” is his: and in churches, schools, workshops, streets, lanes, fields, the hymns of the Reformation were soon sung. From London, at St. Antholin's (where the bell rang for a hymn after the Geneva fashion), the practice extended to all

parts of the country. So soon as 1560 Bishop Jewel speaks of 6,000 people singing hymns together at St. Paul's Cross, which made the mass-priests ungovernably mad. Kings became hymn writers; an evening hymn of bluff Harry VIII. being still extant:—

“O Lorde, the Maker of all thing,
We pray Thee now in this evening,
Us to defend through Thy mercy,—
From all deceite of our enemy.
Let neither us deluded be,
Good Lorde, with dream or phantasy;
Our hearte wakyng in Thee, Thou keepe,
That we in sinne fall not on sleepe.
O, Father, through Thy blessed Sonne,
Grant us this our petition:
In whom, with the Holy Ghost alwaies,
In heaven and earth be laude and praise.”—Amen.

When the Reformation was established, Sternhold and Hopkins published “the Old Version” of the Psalms. They were followed, in Queen Anne's reign, by Tate and Brady, who published “the New Version.” But, with the decline of spiritual and earnest religion, hymn and psalm singing declined again. Its revival, says Mr. Pearson, the writer of *The Oxford Essays*, was identified with Methodism, there being a complete “outburst of psalmody under Wesley and Whitfield,” whose hymn-books were scarcely second in power to their preaching.

The history of our Hymn-book may be divided into four epochs. The *first* we date 1738,—the year of the Wesleys' conversion,—when the first book was issued, while they were yet inquirers after the truth. A little unpretending volume *that* was, published without a name. From this period the Wesleys conjointly published hymn-books on all subjects, with marvellous rapidity. Sometimes two were issued in a year, and the entire number reaches to about fifty. The *second* epoch we date 1780, when, by reason of the multiplication and expensiveness of these books, Mr.

Wesley yielded to importunity and prepared "the Large Book,"—a collection from the Wesleyan Hymns and a few other writers. With this production he took a world of pains. He was doing a great work for the mind and the million of Methodism, and for all generations. Great satisfaction, too, he had with it, inasmuch as "he did not think it inconsistent with modesty to declare that no such book had been published in the English language." Nor was this an extravagant laudation: indeed, there were very few of any other kind except what contained large numbers of the same hymns. The *third* epoch must be fixed at Mr. Wesley's death, when the book underwent revision. Some hymns were divided, some few expunged, some substituted, some (called "Additional Hymns") were placed at the end. The *last epoch* we date 1831. At the request of Conference, Mr. Watson and Mr. Jackson then prepared "the Supplement." This was much needed; for, when the larger book was published, Methodism had scarcely any morning services; the sacraments were not administered by her ministers; there were no missionary meetings, no Sunday-school anniversaries. Moreover, by 1831, the copyright of the old book had run out. Booksellers were publishing cheap editions, and mutilating it, gaining thereby large profits, which should have been derived to the Connexional funds. The Supplement effectually stopped this, by practically perpetuating the copyright of the entire book; and thus our lyric literature received a completeness which we think peculiarly our own. Indeed, we hope to be forgiven, if we repeat Mr. Wesley's gratulatory words concerning our finished psalmody,—“there is no such book in the English language.”

The historic allusions of the Hymn-book we may arrange thus:—

1. *Historic classical allusions.*—DAMOCLES was one of the flatterers of Dionysius, the ancient monarch of Sicily. The wealth and grandeur of that sovereign made him, as he thought, the happiest man in the world. Wishing to cor-

rect these erroneous impressions, the king committed, for a while, the cares of government to Damocles' hands. Ascending the throne, he was enchanted with the pomps and pageantries of royalty; but, lifting his eyes, he discovered, to his dismay, that a naked sword hung over his head as by a horse's hair. This indicated the perils of power and the dangers of misgovernment. Damocles trembled.

"Shew me the naked sword,
Impending o'er my head;
O let me tremble at Thy word,
And to my ways take heed."

2. *Historic local allusions.*—There is a well-known promontory at the Land's End, on each side of which two seas almost meet. In allusion to it, or on the very spot, Mr. Wesley composed one of his finest verses. So narrow is this strip of land at the extremity, that the danger of falling into the sea is considerable. Moreover, the elevation is very great, and the danger thereby much increased. With this in mind, our poet, in appalling language, describes the peril and false security of the sinner. Some little time ago, one of the dignitaries of the Church of England stood on that promontory, with a Methodist who acted as a sort of *cicerone*.—"It was about this, my lord," said he, "that Mr. Wesley wrote his hymn." "What hymn?" his lordship asked. Our friend repeated it,—

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas, I stand
Secure, insensible:
A point of time, a moment's space,
Removes me to that heavenly place,
Or shuts me up in hell!"

"Did Mr. Wesley compose that?" exclaimed the dignitary. "Yes, my lord," the good man answered;—"did you not know?" Let us say that there are a few things in Methodism, more important, which even Ecclesiastical dignitaries might very advantageously acquaint themselves with.

3. *Historic Methodist allusions;—personal allusions.*—One original hymn of JOHN WESLEY's contains personal allusions throughout,—to his own pilgrim life, his freedom from domestic entanglements, his unworldliness, &c.

"How happy is the pilgrim's lot,
How free from every anxious thought,
From worldly hope and fear :

"His happiness, in part, *is mine* ;
Already saved from low design.

"I have no babes to hold me here.

"The things eternal I pursue.

"There is my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home."

It is well known that when Wesley had only £50 a year he lived on £28, and gave away the rest; keeping to the same rate of expenditure when his income had increased. To the Tax Commissioners he returned, by compulsion, a silver spoon or two, as all the plate he possessed; adding, in reply to their incredulity, that if he died worth £10 when all his debts were paid, the world might brand his name and memory as a villain. The very last entry in his *private journal* records that for more than eighty-six years he had kept exact accounts of everything, that he might save all he could—to give all he could.

"Nothing on earth I call my own ;
A stranger, to the world unknown,
I all their goods despise."

Towards the very close of his self-sacrificing life his character was, on one occasion, most rudely assailed. He was called an old hypocrite,—worldly and self-seeking. "What worldly thing," he replied, "have I to gain by travelling, at my age, nearly 4,000 miles a year, exposed to peril and hardship? I am not an old hypocrite," he said emphatically; "nor

do I seek worldly things :” then he quoted his own beautiful hymn,—

“No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness,—
A poor wayfaring man :
I lodge awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.”

There are *allusions to the peculiar character of Methodist hearers*.—At Portland, for instance, the people worked in the stone-quarries, and during preaching the noise of the hammer might frequently be heard on the hard rock.—

“Come, O Thou all-victorious Lord,
Thy power to us make known :
Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
And break these hearts of stone.”

At Newcastle the colliers crowded to service. Many of the vilest of human kind were reformed and saved. On one occasion when Mr. Charles Wesley was there, nine or ten thousand people eagerly listened to the word. The preacher’s soul was drawn out by the sweetest but most powerful constraint, until the discourse had lasted two hours. Again and again he broke forth in vehement exhortation : “Seventy years’ suffering,” he said, “was compensated by that one service.” But the country was lighted up with blazing fires which gleamed on the faces of preacher and people from every quarter, hence the exquisite allusion to the rapid spread of religion, from small beginnings, by means of the Methodist revival :—

“See how great a flame aspires
Kindled by a spark of grace ;
Jesu’s love the nations fires,
Sets the kingdoms on a blaze :
To bring fire on earth He came,
Kindled in some hearts it is ;
Oh ! that all might catch the flame,
All partake the glorious bliss.”

There are *allusions to peculiar Methodist ordinances*.—The Kingswood colliers, in their semi-barbarous state, were accustomed to spend their Saturday nights at the ale-house, drinking and rioting. Many of them were converted to God through Methodist preaching. Still they wished to spend their Saturday nights together,—but in prayer and praise. Thus originated our watch-night services, when the solemnities of death and judgment were especially dwelt upon. At first these watch-nights were monthly, then quarterly, now yearly. Some of the finest of our hymns are “Watch-night Hymns:”

“How many pass the guilty night,
In revelling and frantic mirth.”

“Ye virgin souls arise,
With all the dead awake.”

“To see our Lord appear,
Watching let us be found.”

“Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year.”

There are *allusions to Methodist controversies*.—MOLTHER, a Moravian, early and greatly disturbed our people by his doctrine of “Stillness.” According to his notions, they were to wait for the Spirit, and be still,—not even using the ordinances either of preaching or sacraments.—

“Still for Thy loving kindness, Lord,
I in Thy temple wait:
I look to find Thee in Thy word,
Or at Thy table meet.

“Here, in Thy own appointed ways,
I wait to learn Thy will:
Silent I stand before Thy face,
And hear Thee say ‘Be still.’”

To the great Calvinistic controversies which divided Methodism into its two great branches,—Whitfield and Wesleyan Methodism, and which subsequently raged because of the

celebrated "Minute" on Calvinism,—we have allusions from one end of our Hymn-book to the other. Strongly and most effectively did Charles Wesley's poetry contend for the faith which has greatly toned down the preaching of Calvinian churches and moulded it very much after the Wesleyan type:—

"Ah! give to all Thy servants, Lord,
With power to speak Thy gracious word;
That all who to Thy wounds will flee
May find eternal life in Thee."

There are *allusions to Methodist persecutions and triumphs*.—BUTLER, a ballad-singer of Cork, instigated by the mayor and magistrates, headed a savage mob. Our poor people, irrespective of age or sex, were used in the most revolting manner. Mr. C. Wesley was even tried as a vagabond. On one occasion, when John Wesley was preaching, the mob, maddened with fury, tore up the floor and pulled down the windows and doors. Mr. W. fixed his gentle but piercing eyes upon them, when, strange to say, the mass of people opened in the middle. "A broad way was made for him, because of his enemies," and he passed through unhurt. Then he wrote, "Ye simple souls that stray,"—in which this stanza is found:—

"Angels our servants are,
And keep in all our ways,
And in their watchful hands they bear
The sacred sons of grace."

It is generally supposed that another of our familiar hymns was composed after a deliverance—all but miraculous—from a murderous mob at Wednesbury. It was probably the celebrated "Shrove Tuesday mob," when the most violent men of Wednesbury, Walsall, and Darlaston, combined to hunt down "England's greatest Apostle."* Mr. W. escaped to Nottingham, where his brother received him "looking like

* Dr. Guthrie's Ezekiel.

a hero from the battle-field." To the following *In Memoriam* a tune was composed called "Wednesbury:"—

"Worship and thanks and blessing,
And strength, ascribe to Jesus :
Jesus alone defends His own,
When earth and hell oppress us."

The violent persecutions of the time led to Mr. C. Wesley's clever adaptation to "Nancy Dawson." At one of his services some drunken and disorderly sailors struck up that merry melody. Our ready and versatile poet determined they should be accommodated with the music, only to better words. At the very next service, when the blue jackets were about to repeat their opposition, he gave out—

"Listed into the cause of sin,
Why should a good be evil ?
Music, alas ! too long has been
Prest to obey the devil !
Drunken, or lewd, or light, the lay
Flowed to the soul's undoing ;
Widened and strewed with flowers the way,
Down to eternal ruin.

"Come, let us try if Jesu's love
Will not as well inspire us :
This is the theme of those above,
This upon earth shall fire us.
Say, if your hearts are tuned to sing,
Is there a subject greater ?
Harmony all its strains may bring,
Jesus's name is sweeter.

"Who hath a right like us to sing,—
Us whom His mercy raises ?
Merry our hearts, for Christ is King,
Cheerful are all our faces :
Who of His love doth once partake,
He evermore rejoices ;
Melody in our hearts, we make
Melody with our voices.

"Then let us in His praises join,
Triumph in His salvation

Glory ascribe to love Divine,
 Worship and adoration ;
 Heaven already is begun,
 Opened in each believer ;
 Only believe, and still go on,
 Heaven is ours for ever."

The tune "Nancy Dawson" was sung to these stirring lines, and the sailor boys acknowledged they were beat on their own ground: the contest ended, and Mr. W. finished his service in peace.

But glorious *triumphs* followed troubles—as at Wednesbury, where many of the ringleaders of the riots became devoted Methodists. Everywhere the truth was received by the most degraded classes. So early as 1745 Mr. Charles Wesley visited many of the larger societies, extending his travels to Wales. On his return, he wrote—

"All thanks be to God,
 Who scatters abroad,
 Throughout every place,—
 By the least of His servants,—His savour of grace.
 Who the victory gave,
 The praise let Him have ;
 For the work He hath done,
 All honour and glory to Jesus alone."

4. We have *historic national allusions*.—From 1750 onwards, greatly were England and Europe disturbed: war had broken out. In Canada, serious contentions had arisen between the French and English colonists. The United States were fighting for their independence. An earthquake had destroyed the city of Lisbon, and another had shaken the city of London. Mr. C. Wesley, availing himself, as his wont was, of these adverse and appalling circumstances, wrote many hymns,—for the nation, for times of tumult, hymns occasioned by the earthquake, &c. :—

"Come, Thou conqueror of the nations,
 Now on Thy white horse appear ;
 Earthquakes, deaths, and desolations,
 Signify Thy kingdom near."

He was rising to preach at the Foundry at five o'clock in the morning, when the earthquake shook London. It is said, the earth reeled from west to east, and then back from east to west. In majesty of faith he gave out,—while the very ground reeled under him,—“Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; for the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge.” This he used as a text, while the “strong jarring motion, attended with a rumbling noise like that of thunder,” gave to his words a power and solemnity absolutely appalling. The city was thrown into the utmost fear and consternation. Amidst falling houses, multitudes of the people ran up and down the street crying out frantically,—“An earthquake, an earthquake!” Others, from fear of being suddenly overwhelmed, left their houses and hastened to the fields and open places about the city. There was a vast concourse in Hyde Park, and at midnight Whitfield preached to some 20,000 people, who could find no sleep for their eyes. The general alarm was increased by the report that a fanatic had had it revealed to him that “great part of London and Westminster would be destroyed by an earthquake, between twelve and one at night.” Sublime, indeed, were the calmness and zeal of the great Methodist leaders at this time of terror. One is preaching at midnight to thousands of affrighted people; another quietly retires to rest (having more faith in God than in fanatics) “that he may be the more ready to rise for preaching next morning.” Under these circumstances, one of the most exquisite lyrics our book contains was composed:—

“How weak the thoughts, and vain,
Of self-deluding men;
Men who, fix'd to earth alone,
Think their houses shall endure,
Fondly call their lands their own,
To their distant heirs secure.

“How happy, then, are we,
Who build, O Lord, on Thee!

What can our foundation shock ?
Though the shatter'd earth remove,
Stands our *city* on a rock,
On the rock of heavenly Love.

"A house we call our own,
Which cannot be o'erthrown :
In the general ruin sure,
Storms and *earthquakes* it defies ;
Built immovably secure ;
Built eternal in the skies.

"High on Immanuel's land
We see the fabric stand ;
From a tottering world remove,
To our steadfast mansion there :
Our inheritance above
Cannot pass from heir to heir."

LECTURE II.

IN our last lecture the Poets of the Hymn-book occupied our attention. These we classified, giving biographical sketches. We next proceeded to the history of the Hymn-book, and to its historic allusions. We now consider—

THE EXCELLENCES OF THE HYMN-BOOK: confining our remarks to those which lie on the very surface, and which are universally admitted.

1. *Its Poetic Excellence*.—Let any one contrast Wesleyan Hymns with those in use *before the advent of Methodism*. Popery, it is well known, adopted a language peculiarly its own, and the music of the Romish Church was and is suited to the flow and rhythm of Latin lines. We give a translated stanza or two from the old “Easter Carol”—*O Felii et Felix*:

“Both Mary, as it came to pass,
And Mary Magdalene it was,
And Mary, wife of Cleopas.—Alleluia.

“When John the Apostle heard the fame,
He to the tomb with Peter came,
But on the way out-ran the same.—Alleluia.”

We need not proceed farther. After the Reformation, Sternhold and Hopkins gave their “Old Version” of the Psalms to the world, concerning the rhythm of which, old Thomas Fuller said “any blacksmith, with two hammers and an anvil, could make better music.” Mr. Wesley pronounced it “scandalous doggrel,” and longed for hymns in which the praises of God could be sung both with “sense and poetry.” On the other hand, Mr. Romaine (Mr. W.’s clerical friend) wrote and spoke strongly in favour of the Old Version,—affirming that the wits, and the profane and the godly, had

conspired to do it injustice. Not much, we think, if the following be taken as a specimen :—

“Why dost withdraw thy hand aback,
And hide it in thy lap?
Come, pluck it out, and be not slack,
To give thy foes a rap.”

Tate and Brady's "New Version" came after Sternhold and Hopkins, of whom Archdeacon Hare says they had extraordinary talent for stifling the life and power of David's Psalms. Then followed psalters innumerable, and royal sanctions too. Indeed, King James tried his royal hand. Three bishops handled David's harp,—Parker, King, Manton; three Georges,—Withers, Sandys, and good George Herbert; also, Sir Philip Sydney, Bacon, Milton, Merrick, Watts, Wesley, and many more, concerning some of whom the lines written on Sir Richard Blackmore's Version might be applied :—

“He took his Muse at once, and dipp'd her
Full in the middle of the Scripture;
What wonders there the strange man old did,
Sternhold himself was out-Sternholded!”

Wesley, however, published his Hymn-book, and, considering times and circumstances, it was a lyrical phenomenon. Critically to examine its poetry is foreign from our intention. It is too late in the day; besides, the writer does not possess the requisite capability. This, however, may be affirmed, that there never was but one hymnist to divide the bays with Charles Wesley, and that was Dr. Watts; and even Milner (Watts's biographer) allows the superiority of Wesley in several points, specially in poetic force and fire; while the doctor himself nobly said he would give all the poetry he ever wrote to be able to compose "Wrestling Jacob." With the eulogies of Montgomery, Alexander Knox, Isaac Taylor, &c., &c., students of hymnology are familiar. Mr. Pearson, an unfriendly, though an able, critic, says, that "Jesu, lover of my soul," is amply sufficient to place Wesley

on the highest niche as a sacred lyrist;* and Southey pronounces "Stand, the omnipotent decree," the finest lyric in the English language. It was written when the earthquake shook London, and the frantic people thought the judgment day was at hand:—

"Stand, the omnipotent decree:
 Jehovah's will be done!
 Nature's end we wait to see,
 And hear her final groan:
 Let this earth dissolve, and blend
 In death the wicked and the just;
 Let those ponderous orbs descend,
 And grind us into dust.

"Rests secure the righteous man!
 At His Redeemer's beck,
 Sure to emerge, and rise again,
 And mount above the wreck;
 Lo! the heavenly spirit towers,
 Like flame, o'er Nature's funeral pyre,
 Triumphs in immortal powers,
 And claps her wings of fire!"

It is to this hymn that Milner refers in the following passage:—"In estimating the merits of these two great hymnists—(Watts and Wesley), the greatest, unquestionably, that our country can boast,—I should not hesitate to ascribe to the former greater skill in design, to the latter, in execution; to the former more originality, to the latter more polish. Many of Wesley's flights are bold, daring, and magnificent. The spirit of the righteous man, resting secure amid the conflagration of nature's elements, and 'clapping' its 'wings of fire,' is a vision of surpassing grandeur." This is certainly saying much for "the Poet of Methodism," in a review expressly written to uphold the claims of Dr. Watts.

2. *Evangelistic excellency*.—Tate and Brady, as well as Sternhold and Hopkins, were sorely lacking in the Evangelical element. Indeed, the Psalms do not contain the *full*

* *Oxford Essays*, 1858.

gospel as the New Testament does; hence, Coleridge said truly enough of the Church Service, "We pray like Christians, *but we sing like Jews*." Neither did Dr. Watts come up to the Evangelical standard of the Wesleys. Their own conversion and religious experience were that standard,—the standard of their creed and psalmody *both*;—differing certainly from that of the Crispian school of Dr. Chauncey, to whose church Watts succeeded. Criticism tells us that "Petrarch's sonnets are little pictures of the poet's own emotions;" so Charles Wesley's hymns are little pictures of his own conversion to God and subsequent religious attainments and aspirations. The very first hymn in our book may be looked on as a *representative hymn*. Tradition says it was written by Charles Wesley on his own conversion. Ten long years he had sought the Lord before he found peace: then he hesitated to make known what God had done for his soul, lest he should lose the blessing. One of his friends, perhaps Mr. Bray, replied, "Had you a thousand tongues, you ought to publish it with them all." Soon after, he wrote our first hymn, and hence the allusion in the first stanza:—

"O for a thousand tongues, to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace!

"My gracious Master, and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad
The honour of Thy Name.

"Jesus! the Name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

"Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb,
Your loosen'd tongues employ;
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

"Awake from guilty nature's sleep,
And Christ shall give *you* light;
Cast all your sins into the deep,
And wash the Æthiop white.

"With me, your chief, ye then shall know,
Shall feel your sins forgiven;
Anticipate your heaven below,
And own that love is heaven."

It was on *the day of Pentecost* that Charles Wesley received the baptism of the Spirit as the Spirit of adoption. A few days after—*Whitsuntide still*—John Wesley obtained peace. Thirteen years he had been labouring after holiness, groping in the dark. When pardoned, a few friends accompanied him to his brother's rooms, in Little Britain. "My brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared—'I believe!' We sang with great joy, and parted with prayer." Mr. Jackson gives the two following as the hymns sung on this glorious occasion :—*

"Where shall my wondering soul begin?
How shall I all to heaven aspire?
A slave redeemed from death and sin,
A brand pluck'd from the eternal fire:
How shall I equal triumphs raise,
Or sing my great Deliverer's praise?

"O how shall I Thy goodness tell,
Father, which Thou to me hast showed?
That I, a child of wrath and hell,
I should be called a child of God,
Should know, should feel, my sins forgiven,
Blessed with this antepast of heaven!"

The other hymn thus concludes :—

"Long my imprisoned spirit lay,
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

* Jackson's Life of Charles Wesley.

“No condemnation now I dread ;
 Jesus and all in Him is mine !
 Alive in Him, my living Head,
 And clothed in righteousness divine,
 Bold I approach the eternal throne,
 And claim the crown, through Christ, my own.”

Charles Wesley was composing these hymns at the time, and they were published soon after these conversions. But what a picture!—A little room in Little Britain!—Charles Wesley and a few friends singing hymns of praise over John Wesley, *a new convert*! Who can estimate the influence and results of that one conversion on the interests of this country and of the world? We call these representative hymns. The same evangelicity *runs through the book*; hence the *last* hymn in it is a redemption hymn to the Holy Trinity, and the last but one is on the forgiveness of sins. “’Tis Jesus the first and the last:” He is “Alpha and Omega,—beginning and ending.” Charles Wesley’s heart was full of Christ: so are his hymns. Thus he expresses it:—

“My heart is full of Christ, and longs
 Its glorious matter to declare :
 Of Him I make my loftiest songs,
 I cannot from His praise forbear ;
 My ready tongue makes haste to sing
 The glories of my Heavenly King.”

3. *Paraphrastic and expository excellence.*—The Wesleys were preachers and profound students of Scripture, and their hymns were designedly and professedly expositions of many texts. Let any one take up that wonderful index to texts at the end of our book: that which I commonly use in my study has no less than *twenty columns*—closely printed—of textual references. There are hymns of two, three, and four-fold application, so that one hymn expounds several passages. Well might Montgomery say that Charles Wesley “makes the *whole tour* of Bible literature.”

Now, in the midst of such vast and varied excellence, the difficulty is selection. Two disciples journey to Emmaus.

They are perplexed about the melancholy events which had just taken place at Jerusalem. Jesus joins them; but their eyes are closed, that they know Him not. To their bewildered minds He opens the Scriptures,—shewing that Christ ought to suffer, and rise from the dead. Such hallowed companionship beguiles the distance: they forget their care and toil. He turns in with them, and reveals Himself. “Did not our hearts burn within us as He talked with us by the way?”

“Talk with us, Lord, Thyself reveal,
While here o’er earth we rove;
Speak to our hearts, and let us feel
The kindling of Thy love.

“With Thee conversing, we forget
All time, and toil, and care.”

“Thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, my feet from falling.” The paraphrase here is singularly exact—*verbatim et literatim*,—and beautifully evangelical and practical:—

“My ‘soul,’ through my Redeemer’s care,
Saved from the *second* ‘death’ I feel;
‘My eyes from tears’ of dark despair,
‘My feet from falling’ into hell.

“Wherefore to Him my ‘feet’ shall run,
‘My eyes’ on His perfections gaze;
‘My soul’ shall live for God alone,
And all within me shout His praise.”

“Wrestling Jacob” supplies another most striking and familiar example. The mysterious personage with whom the patriarch had this holy struggle was undoubtedly the second Person in the glorious Trinity,—Christ the manifested Jehovah of the Old Testament. “I have seen *God* face to face, and my life is preserved.” “There wrestled *a man* with him until the breaking of the day.” “Yet, Jacob had power with *the angel*.” This last distinction is mediatorial: it was the angel of the covenant, the messenger of mercy, at least in

human and typical form. Now there can be little doubt that this was the time of Jacob's justification by faith. Penitentially wrestling in and through Christ,—overwhelmed with the trouble of his sins,—he is fully and graciously forgiven. “What is Thy name? and he said, Jacob.” The very name—meaning a supplanter—brings up, for the last time, the evil which had so long pursued him. “Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel:” the sin and the memorial of it both pass away. “And Jacob asked Him and said, Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy name. And He said, Wherefore is it thou dost *ask after My name?* Have I not *revealed it in saving thee?*” “And He blessed him there:” in his very heart revealing His name afresh, as “the Lord, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.” It was then the sun rose on Jacob,—the Sun of Righteousness and that of Penuel,—and, halting on his thigh, he lifted up his eyes, and behold Esau came, whose heart the Lord had touched.

- “Yield to me now, for I am weak;
 But confident in self-despair:
 Speak to my heart, in blessings speak:
 Be conquer'd by my instant prayer:
 Speak, or Thou never hence shalt move,
 And tell me if Thy Name is love.
- “’Tis love! ’tis love! *Thou diedst for me:*
 I hear Thy whisper in my heart!
 The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
 Pure, universal love Thou art:
 To me, to all, Thy bowels move,
 Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.
- “I need not tell Thee who I am,
 My misery and sin declare:
 Thyself hath called me by my name,
 Look on Thy hands, and read it there:
 But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou?
 Tell me Thy Name, and tell me now.
- “*I know Thee, Saviour*, who Thou art,
 Jesus, the feeble sinner's Friend:

Nor wilt Thou with the night depart,
 But stay and love me to the end :
 Thy mercies never shall remove ;
 Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

“The Sun of Righteousness on me
 Hath rose, with healing in His wings :
 Wither’d my Nature’s strength, from Thee
 My *soul* its life and succour brings ;
 My help is all laid up above ;
 Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.

“Lame as I am, I take the prey ;
 Hell, earth, and sin, with ease o’ercome ;
 I leap for joy, pursue my way,
 And, as a bounding hart, fly home ;
 Through all eternity to prove
 Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.”

We wonder not that Dr. Watts spoke of this composition as unrivalled. To Charles Wesley’s heart God had revealed His Son, after a long night-struggle for life ; and the lips of our poet were always burning,—a live coal from the altar having touched them. As an Evangelistic paraphrast we know of no hymnist to be compared with him. Some thirty years ago, a member of the Oxford University,—supposed to be Mr. Keble,—aided by Dr. Pusey, published a version of the Psalms. One of these gentlemen was Professor of Poetry, the other of Hebrew. Great things certainly might have been expected from such combination of learning and poetic talent. The book is now scarcely known. We give a short example, by way of contrast, from the 134th Psalm.—“Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord. Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.”

“Behold now, praise the Lord,
 Who serve the Lord sing praise,
 Who in the house of our adored,
 Stand nightly, stand always.

"Toward the holy place,
Lift hands, and bless His Name;
The Lord from Zion give thee grace,
Who heaven and earth did frame."

Listen to Charles Wesley—spirit-stirring and Evangelistic,—

"Ye servants of God, whose diligent care
Is ever employed in watching and prayer;
With praises unceasing your *Jesus* proclaim,
Rejoicing, and blessing His excellent Name.

"'Tis Jesus commands, come all to His house,
And lift up your hands, and pay Him your vows;
And while you are giving your Maker His due,
The Lord out of heaven shall sanctify you."

4. *Reverentialness and intense spirituality.*—Mr. Wesley could not endure familiarity in approaching to God, whether in prayer or praise. Hence he strongly objected to those expressions which he characterizes "fondling," and which are to be found in the Moravian Hymn-book, Watts's *Horæ Lyricæ*, &c. "Dear Jesus," "Dearest Jesus," "My dear Lord," &c., he never himself employed, thinking them more appropriate to the lips of a lover in speaking to a lover, than to the lips of a sinner in addressing God. Indeed, he hesitated to give out his brother's noble hymn, because of this one expression,—*"that dear disfigured face."* It is not surprising, then, that, towards the close of life, he exercised such severe censorship over all the hymns to be perpetuated in the Large Book. No term bordering on irreverence was admitted.

Two classes of hymns there are whose high-toned spirituality has been objected to. Some on "full redemption," for instance, in which the poet longs *exclusively* for God, as if with an utter *abandon* of all other things. These, it has been thought, are scarcely true to life and experience; though they are almost the literal expression of a very familiar passage which seems to have filled the poet's conception: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee;" none of the blessed in heaven, whom, thank God, the unfailing charity of the Gospel allows and

requires us to love still; none upon earth, dividing the heart's highest aspirations *for the Lord*. True, indeed, it is, that the *Lord Himself* becomes the portion of His people; not only in the manifestation of His favour, but, consequentially, in the possession of His nature. As by the mystery of natural birth we become partakers of human nature, so by the mystery of a spiritual birth we become "partakers of the Divine nature." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Nothing less, then, *than God*—than the holiness of the Divine nature,—would suffice for our sacred poet. "As the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Yea, and in these longings for God, we long for all that is good,—all good being *comprised*,—even as in loving God, the love of all good is comprised.

"With Thee, of every good possessed."

"Thee, O my *all-sufficient* good,
I want, and Thee alone."

"Thy *favour* and Thy nature, too,
To me, to all restore;
Forgive, and *after God renew*,
Then keep me evermore."

"Give me *Thyself*, for ever give."

"Less than *Thyself* cannot suffice."

"Thy gifts, alas! cannot suffice,
Unless *Thyself* be given."

"Give me the enlarged desire,
And open, Lord, my soul,
Thy own fulness to require,
And comprehend the whole:
Stretch my faith's capacity,
Wider and yet wider still;
Then with all that is in Thee,
My soul for ever fill."

Exception has been taken also to our hymns on "death and heaven,"—to those longings for dissolution which certainly are peculiar to Charles Wesley. Whitfield said, roughly, that he liked hymns "which people could sing without telling lies;" and, doubtless, there are many persons who do not thus desire to depart. But, if no hymns be used in our assemblies but such as are suitable to *all* classes of persons, our psalmody will be limited enough. However, the hymns we now speak of do represent a great fact in the history of early Methodism. Very many of our godly people *could* adopt the beautiful prayer of one of the fathers,—“If I cannot see Thy face and live, let me die that I may see it.” “I hope,” wrote Mr. Wesley to Christopher Hopper, “that you are ready for heaven,—on the tiptoe.” Thus, in truth, our persecuted Methodist ancestors lived: and this accounts for the grandeur of their deaths. Triumphant deaths were rare things in the world when the Methodists began to preach a free, full, and conscious salvation. The Churches were asleep, and the saving truths of Christianity were buried in Homilies and Liturgies. It was the unclouded prospect of heaven which, for our people, took away the terror of death. Their experience stood out as a Wesleyan distinction. Even Dr. Watts sang—

“Could we but make *our doubts* remove,
Those gloomy thoughts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love,
With unclouded eyes.”

Charles Wesley—

“The promised land, from Pisgah’s top,
I now exult to see:
My hope is full, O glorious hope!
Of immortality.”

There are no deaths on record of greater sublimity than those of the first Methodists. “Do you not hear them?” said Peard Dickinson, “do you not hear them?” His eyes were closing to the things of earth; but, as the world receded,

heaven opened: his ears with sounds seraphic rang. "Not a word spoken!" he added, "not one word,—unless it be—glory—glory—glory!" Thus he departed. The death of Hannah Richardson, of Bristol, checked a mad persecution. The people were sure that the religion, which enabled a woman to meet death as she did, could not be false. Mr. Wesley visited her again and again. Her sufferings were excruciating, but

"The fire forgot its power to burn,
The lambent flames around her played."

And our people, whose very lives were hunted for, bore her remains along the streets, singing one of those very funeral hymns. Why they are so jubilant we may now understand:

"Happy soul! thy days are ended,
All thy mourning days below;
Go, by angel-guards attended,
To the sight of Jesus go."

"Hark, a voice divides the sky,
Happy are the faithful dead."

"Rejoice for a brother deceased,
Our loss is his infinite gain:
A soul out of prison released."

"Again we lift our voice,
And shout our solemn joys;
Cause of highest rapture this,
Raptures that shall never fail:
See a soul, escaped to bliss,
Keep the Christian festival."

"And shall we mourn to see
Our fellow-prisoner free?
Free from doubts, and griefs, and fears,
In the haven of the skies?
Can we weep to see the tears
Wiped for ever from his eyes?"

"Ah, lovely appearance of death,
What sight upon earth is so fair?"

Not all the gay pageants that breathe
Can with a dead body compare."

Wonderful and numberless are the triumphant deaths recorded in Methodist biographies, from the first publication of them in the "Minutes" and the "Arminian Magazine," to this day; and precious, therefore, have our funeral hymns been, and precious will they be.

5. *Perspicuity is another excellence.*—ADDISON contemplated a Metrical version of the Psalms; and one of his admirers rejoiced greatly that the purpose was never accomplished. This strange reason was assigned:—"We should have had David's Psalms like *Butler's Analogy*." *Doddridge's Hymns* want simplicity and ease: Job Orton says he composed them from the matter of his sermons,—to sing after them. *Keble's Christian Year* soon attained much greater notoriety than it deserved; but, even High Church authorities admit that, for want of poetical and metrical simplicity, it is unfit for the sanctuary: and we are glad to say that, with the exception of a few stanzas from the *Morning and Evening Hymns*, it has rarely been adapted to congregational singing. Newton, in his Preface to the *Olney Hymns*, contends that there is a peculiar style of composition required for psalmody, which the true poet cannot, in many cases, manage. Hymns should be hymns, he adds, "*not odes*;" perspicuity being chiefly attended to. And our own great Richard Watson has laid down the same canon:—"The meaning ought to be so obvious as to be comprehended *at once*, that men may speak to God directly, without being distracted by investigating the real meaning of the words put into their lips."

Marvellous is the adaptation of our hymns to every order of intellect; so that one of the most accomplished of our laity has recently put it into print, that, if two books only could be possessed by him, these should be the Bible and Wesley's Hymns.* Yet, who ever heard of a poor man com-

* Methodist Magazine, October, 1831, p. 907.

plaining that he could not comprehend Charles Wesley's poetry? But from *one* person, of *any* class, did I ever hear such complaint. Alas! this was an unhappy Methodist backslider, who was treading his steps to destruction, though surrounded by godly relatives. "I cannot understand the Hymn-book," he once said, in my hearing. Surprised at that, I asked for an instance; when, strange to say, he gave the only hymn our book contains on Hell. He read it thus:

"Terrible thought, shall I alone,
Who may be saved, shall I?—
Of all, alas! whom I have known,
Through sin for ever die."

The first and second lines he took as one continuous interrogative, ruining the sense and power of the entire stanza. "Oh," I replied, "the fault is in the reading, not with the poet: part of the second line—'Who may be saved'—is a parenthetical affirmation that even such a sinner might be saved, as well as his friends. Thus:—"

"Terrible thought! shall I alone—
Who may be saved—shall I—
Of all, alas! whom I have known,
Through sin for ever die?

"While all my old companions dear,
With whom I once did live,
Joyful at God's right hand appear,
A blessing to receive:

"Shall I—amidst a ghastly band,
Dragg'd to the judgment seat,
Far on the left with horror stand,
My fearful doom to meet?

"Ah, no: I still may turn and live—"

"Indeed," said he, interrupting me: "that's the meaning, is it?" He uttered not another word, and I thought it best to leave the impression as it was. The application of those appalling lines to his own case was almost too evident. I hoped the effect would be salutary; but he continued in sin, and, shortly afterwards, his soul was "*hurried hence*,"—

death being so frightfully sudden that none of his friends could reach him before it took place. "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

6. *Metrical diversity and fitness for musical expression.*—Dr. WATTS's range of metres is very limited; so much so, that, with a mere exception, the whole of his *hymns* are composed in long, common, and short measures. It is hardly requisite to say that, with all their excellences, there is much metrical monotony. Charles Wesley's Muse ranges through about *thirty*, with all the ease of some sweet singing bird hopping from twig to twig, while he constantly varies his note. No English poet has surpassed ours in this respect, and it is hard to say in which measure he excelled most. To every diversity of style, to all the changes of poetic purpose, we have exquisite metrical adaptation;—*long drawn measures and sombre,*—

"Shrinking from the cold hand of death,
I, too, shall gather up my feet."

Then, *measures buoyant and tripping,*—

"Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear."

Measures the most subdued,—

"Jesu, shall I never be
Firmly grounded upon Thee?"

Then, *merry as a birthday song.*—This hymn was composed on the natal day of Mrs. Charles Wesley, and placed on her dressing-table before she rose from bed,—

"Come away to the skies; my beloved, arise,
And rejoice on the day thou wast born."

Measures the most timid and distrustful,—

"But, above all, afraid
Of my own bosom foe;
Still let me seek to Thee for aid,
To Thee my weakness show."

Then, the most *bold and defiant*,—

“In the strength of Jesu’s Name,
I with the monster fight.”

Such is the harmony of thought with metre, in Charles Wesley, that in the very middle of a stanza he will change the measure to give effect to some striking sentiment. Mr. Burgess cites a case,—

“By all hell’s host withstood,
We all hell’s host o’erthrow.”

Instead of the regular movement of three iammbuses, each consisting of a short syllable followed by a long one, we have, in the first line; an iambus, a spondee, an iambus; in the second, an iambus and two spondees. This gives an appropriate harshness to the lines, and we are compelled to read them more slowly, and with a sustained emphasis suitable to the poet’s conception.

Charles Wesley’s *musical* taste was about as great as his poetical talent; hence his rhythmical superiority to the most distinguished of his compeers. Doddridge’s ear was bad, so was Watts’s; and this may, in large degree, account for the want of persistent harmony in many of their compositions. Montgomery says that “each stanza should be a poetical *tune*, played down to the last note:” a canon in lyric literature which our own bard exemplifies beyond all others; the music of his versification being surpassingly fine. The metrical and musical harmony of our hymns may also account for the adaptation of tunes to them by the great masters of the last century. LAMPE wrote many, which may be found in “The Companion to the Hymn-book,”—an admirable selection published by the Book-room, and which was prepared by an eminent Wesleyan barrister. Lampe was once an infidel, and composer of music for the London Opera House; but, converted to God by the reading of *Wesley’s Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, he became a decided Methodist. HANDEL composed tunes expressly for

our hymns: *three* of them may be found and authenticated in the same excellent "Companion;" their respective names being—"Fitzwilliam," "Resurrection," "Wentworth." Both these great masters often met the Wesleys at Mrs. Rich's,—a lady actress this, and wife of the lessee of Covent Garden Theatre, when Handel's Oratorios were performed there, and led by himself. She was converted to God, through the preaching of Charles Wesley, and at once abandoned her profession. Her husband indeed required her re-appearance on the stage: she would consent on this condition,—that she should deliver her protest *against* the theatre *in* the theatre. Of course she never more appeared, and shortly after Mr. Rich died, leaving her a wealthy widow. It was at her house that Lampe, Handel, C. Wesley, John Wesley, and others, frequently met. What a glorious company! Let us name them again:—Handel,* Lampe, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Mrs. Rich! To be there would be "like a little heaven below." It is said that to Lampe C. Wesley addressed his hymn on

* It is well known that Handel was a very profane man. Under irritation his temper became so ungovernable, that he would swear in three different languages. Yet Charles Wesley, in a beautiful elegy on the death of Dr. Boyce, places him in heaven, among the worshippers before the throne of God:—

"Thy generous, good, and upright heart,
That sighed for a celestial lyre,
Was tuned on earth to bear a part
Symphonious with that warbling choir,
Where *Handel* strikes the golden strings,
And plausive angels clap their wings."

Not simply because of his transcendent musical genius, could Charles Wesley believe the great lyrist saved. Handel passed through sore adversities. He found that he had hewn out cisterns that could hold no water. Rival composers raised great fends against him. Nothing could moderate their envy and malice. Strange to say, with two—Bononcini and Ariosti—he publicly contended in an opera of three acts; each composer having set one. Handel's portion was declared the best. But his troubles did not end. Managerial disasters were so great, that from the opera he was compelled to retire. His constitution was damaged, and his losses £10,000. The subsequent attempts to give operas at Covent Garden were also mortifying and unprofitable. So were his spiritual concerts, or oratorios. A cabal still existed, whose object was to damage and chafe him. Towards the close of life he became blind. A great change passed over his spirit. Regularly he was found attending public worship, and by his gestures the depth of his feelings was clearly indicated. Charles Wesley, then, had reason for representing the great composer of "The Messiah" striking his golden harp with angels and archangels, and the whole company of heaven, to Him that hath loved us.

“the true use of music :”—

“Jesus, Thou soul of all our joys,
For whom we now lift up our voice,
And all our strength exert :
Vouchsafe the grace we humbly claim,
Compose into a thankful frame,
And tune Thy people's heart.

“To magnify Thy awful Name,
To spread the honours of the Lamb,
Let us our voices raise ;
Our souls and bodies' powers unite,
Regardless of our own delight,
And dead to human praise.

“Still let us on our guard be found,
And watch against the powers of sound,
With sacred jealousy :
Lest, haply, sense should damp our zeal
And music's charms bewitch and steal
Our hearts away from Thee.

“Then let us praise our common Lord,
And sweetly join with one accord
Thy goodness to proclaim :
Jesus, Thyself in us reveal,
And all our faculties shall feel
Thy harmonizing Name.

“With calmly reverential joy,
O let us all our lives employ
In setting forth Thy love ;
And raise in death our triumph higher,
And sing, with all the heavenly choir,
That endless song above.”

THE INFLUENCE OF THE HYMN-BOOK.

1. *From the first this has been very great.*—Both the Wesleys had great musical as well as poetical taste, and to the tunes and singing of Methodism they directed special attention. Mr. Wesley published several Tune-books, also “Grounds for Vocal Melody,” “Directions for Congregational Singing,” &c.; and to the hymns themselves were prefixed the names of ap-

propriate tunes. There was this peculiarity about the singing of the early methodists: God had touched the hearts of this people, and they sang with the spirit and with the understanding—a somewhat rare thing in those Laodicean and degenerate days.* And it is a notorious fact that the heartiness and excellence of the singing attracted many people to our services. Yea, some went determined to hear *that*, and nothing else. Queer tales were told in former times illustrative of this. One man, a publican, went to chapel. When singing was over, he put his fingers into his ears that he might not hear prayer or preaching. But a fly lighted on the tip of his nose, and, taking his finger out “to drive the vexatious intruder away,” the preacher happened, at that instant, to be saying, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear!” The man’s attention was arrested: he *did* hear the word of God, and obey it, too. An Irishman, at Wexford, went to a service in a barn. He got into a sack to escape being seen. Strange to say, during the preaching the man was deeply convinced of sin, and began to cry out in the sack for mercy. The harmless worshippers thought the devil himself was in it. At length, screwing their courage up, they ventured to turn him out. He found peace, and became a new creature. The most extraordinary instance of sudden conversion, Southey says, he ever heard of.

Mr. Wesley was exceedingly precise as to the character of the tunes employed in worship. Simple melodies he always preferred; while to fugue and repeat-tunes he strongly objected. The former many congregations spoiled, and the latter spoiled the devotions of many congregations. “Flying music” he could not and would not endure, nor anything which the *people* were not able heartily and easily to join in. Methodist singing has always been distinguished as the singing of *the people*; and let us beware lest, by ultra or

* One good man sang out of tune, to the offence of Mr. Wesley’s delicate ear. “John,” said he, “you do not sing in tune.” The man stopped, but soon began again. The rebuke was repeated. “Please, sir, I sing with my *heart*,” was the sufficient reply. “Then sing on,” said Mr. W.

pseudo-scientific music (or any other means), this be interfered with.

Touching repeat tunes, those who direct our congregational singing should never choose one of these without conscientiously looking through the entire hymn, to see where the repetition will occur. A few months ago I read a newspaper report of a congregation having "a strange entomological pursuit." They were chasing a flea.

The line sung was this—

"And chase the fleeting hour."

The repeat was on the first syllable of *flee*ting, thus—

And chase the flee—

And chase the flee—

And chase the flee—ting hour.

Another congregation, some time since, greatly amused many young people by a repeat equally ludicrous. The line sung was, "But love thee better than before." The repeat occurred on the syllable *bet*, which was made a musical emphasis, so—

But love thee Bet—

But love thee Bet—

But love thee Bet—ter than before.

I heard of another case not long ago, too revolting to particularize.

As Mr. Wesley liked simple melodies, so he liked simple arrangements; and in the preface to his "Select Hymns," with tunes, he has this passage:—"I determined, whoever compiled this should follow my directions, not mending our tunes, but setting them down neither better nor worse than they were. At length I have prevailed. The following collection contains all the tunes which are in common use among us. They are pricked true, exactly as I desire our congregations to sing them. This, therefore, I recommend in preference to all others." With singing-men and singing-women there has, it seems, been difficulty *ab initio*; and yet many of them will offend against the simplicity that should

ever mark the singing of the sanctuary, and which *does* mark the singing of Methodism to a large extent, whatever may be said of other communities. Some time ago, a new arrangement of "the Old Hundred" was sung in a church. A good churchman, of the olden school, who scarcely recognised it, thought the entire choir was drunk. At length, being much excited, he got up and said so. The good old gentleman, however, was mistaken: it was not the choir that had been made drunk, but the Old Hundredth psalm-tune.

2. *The doctrinal influence of our Hymn-book is unparalleled.*—Mr. Wesley intended the book to be "a little body of divinity." Such it is: "the Bible itself put into poetry," and often with a literality positively marvellous. Every doctrine essential to salvation is beautifully embodied and expressed: the fall of man; human depravity; the sinfulness of mankind; the necessity of redemption; the Divinity and the atonement of Christ—its universal availableness; repentance, justification by faith, adoption, the witness of the Spirit, regeneration, entire sanctification, full assurance, death, judgment, heaven, hell. The Hymn-book has been pronounced "The People's Theological Institutes," and thousands could distinctly give their doctrinal views in a line or stanza from Charles Wesley, who have never read either the "Four Volumes of Sermons," or the "Notes on the New Testament." Indeed, the Wesleyan Hymn-book is one of the most mighty educators in Divine truth that the world possesses, and almost ubiquitous. By means of its glowing and sanctified poetry, the word of Christ dwells richly in millions of minds. Yea, it is photographed on the heart of multitudes, who remember little of the definitions or didactics of the pulpit. Old Hopkins assigned this reason for publishing his Old Version:—many could remember truth in poetry that could not in prose.

But that which gives the Hymn-book an influence altogether unique is our *connexional principle* and *character*. Archdeacon Sandford complains sorely that there is no

authorized hymn-book in the Church of England, and that, as any clergyman can have a selection of his own, hymns are sung in the Establishment, of every class, from Puseyism down to Arianism. This very important question has been earnestly discussed in Convocation, the issue being a strongly expressed desire for a selection authorized by the two Archbishops. A writer in the "Christian Observer" ridicules this proposal, affirming, first, that it is almost impossible for two clergymen to agree about hymns, any more than Pratt and Newton could; secondly, that there is no power whatever in the Church of England to enforce the use of *any* particular book. But who ever heard of two Methodist ministers that could *not* agree about *our* book? Moreover, let any attempt be made to substitute another for it, and very soon will the people show their agreement too. By virtue of the authorization which our hymns have always had, and which our connexional character involves, they are, at this day, sung in all quarters of the globe, in many lands and in many tongues. Prince Albert died repeating—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee."

And, about the same time, our Missionary Notices recorded the death of a Cree Methodist chief, of the Hudson's Bay territory, who passed into eternity literally shouting—

"O for a thousand tongues, to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!"

From the far North to the far South, these blessed productions are found; in the Popish, as well as the Protestant, countries of Europe; among the islands of the Mediterranean; at "The Rock;" in Africa, Hindoostan, Australasia; among the myriads in China. To the Friendly Islands 3,000 Hymn-books, in the native tongue, have recently been exported. The cannibal Fijian has learned to strike Charles Wesley's harp, as the down-trodden populations of the Carribbees have done long ago. In America, eight million Methodist voices, every Sab-

bath, sing the songs of Zion in the verse of our immortal bard. At the rising of the sun, with the morning sacrifice, and following the circuit of the great orb of day to the setting thereof, Charles Wesley's poetry is heard. Who, then, can estimate the influence, the world-wide influence, of our marvellous Hymn-book?

"Eternal are Thy mercies, Lord;
Eternal truth attends Thy word;
Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
Till suns shall rise and set no more."

3. *The influence of the Hymn-book in the formation of the godly life and character.*—How many persons have been awakened to a sense of their danger as sinners by means of our hymns! Mr. Black, who, under God, laid the foundations of Methodism in British Eastern America, was aroused by this means. An abandoned prodigal, a short time ago, by a sort of chance, entered one of our village chapels. The preacher was giving out—

"The prodigal He will not spurn,
But pity and forgive him all."

The poor lad's heart was broken, and he returned to his father. How many *desponding ones* have thus gathered hope, —light in darkness! I once visited a deeply fallen backslider, who had not been in God's house for about a score years. Vice had brought him prematurely to the gates of death. As I entered his bedroom he took up a hymn-book, which lay by his side. "Ah, sir," said he, "I have a little comfort here;" and he turned to this glorious Gospel stanza, and read it:—

"Millions of transgressors poor,
Thou hast for Jesu's sake forgiven;
Made them of Thy favour sure,
And snatched from hell to heaven.
Millions more thou ready art,
To save and to forgive!
Every soul and every heart
Of man, Thou would'st receive."

How many have thus found *Aids to faith in Christ*:—

“O believe the record true,
God to you His Son hath given !
Ye may now be happy, too,
Find on earth the life of heaven.”

How many have thus told the *Joys of their salvation*:—

“My God is reconciled,
His pardoning voice I hear.”

And how many, in the fine dedication language of Charles Wesley, have expressed their *Entire Consecration to God*:—

“Take my soul and body’s powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will ;
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel ;
All I think, or speak, or do ;
Take my heart, but make it new.”

When Mr. Wesley was old and well stricken in years, he invariably closed his society-meetings with this verse:—

“O that, without a lingering groan,
I may the welcome word receive,
My body, with my charge, lay down,
And cease at once to work and live.”

When his brother Charles died, the aged patriarch was in Lancashire. The letter which announced the death had been delayed, so that his attendance at the funeral was impossible. He proceeded, therefore, to Bolton, and took the service according to appointment. This heavy trial may be considered the last of a series of great bereavements. In one sense, Mr. Wesley was now left alone,—all his early friends and coadjutors having departed. Whitfield had long been dead ; Grimshaw was dead ; Vincent Perronet had recently passed away ; Fletcher, too,—and now Charles Wesley ! At Bolton, the service was opened by giving out his brother’s hymn:—

“Come, O Thou traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see !

My company before is gone,
And I am left alone——."

Here the great and greatly-afflicted saint sat down, overpowered by his emotions. He wept loudly. The congregation, for a moment, was awed to the dearest silence, and then wept too. In a few minutes he rose again,—gave out the same hymn,—and went on with the service. Another affecting scene was witnessed at City-road chapel. Mr. Watson records it in his *Life of Wesley*. A vast multitude of people had congregated to hear the sorrowing patriarch preach. On entering the pulpit he stood, for awhile, in perfect silence,—his eyes closed,—his lips gently moving. During an appalling stillness, the eyes of all were fixed upon him. He was clearly holding mysterious communion with the heavenly world, and with those who had gone to it. When some time had elapsed, he solemnly opened the Hymn-book, and gave out another of his brother's noble hymns,—one he was specially fond of:—

"Come, let us join our friends above,
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of love,
To joys celestial rise :
One family, we dwell in Him,
One church above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

"Ten thousand to their endless home,
This solemn moment fly ;
And we are to the margin come,
And we expect to die.
His militant embodied host,
With wishful looks we stand,
And long to see that happy coast,
And reach the heavenly land.

"Even now by faith we join our hands,
With those that went before,
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands,
On the eternal shore."

Mr. Wesley *died* repeating our hymns. "How necessary it is," he said, "for every one to be on the right foundation:—

" 'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!'"

On the day before his departure, after a very restless night he began to sing:—

"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored."

"In a little while, he broke out in a manner, which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished all present, in these words:—

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath;
And, when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers."

Mr. Fletcher also died repeating our hymns. He had delighted much in these lines:—

"Jesu's blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries!"

And, whenever Mrs. F. repeated them, he would answer, "Boundless, boundless, boundless!" As articulation was failing, he exclaimed—

"Mercy's full power I *soon* shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love!"

Many of Methodism's distinguished men have had the language of the Hymn-book on their lips almost to the last gasp. Our great Watson! "I am a poor worm," said he, "but

" 'I shall behold His face,
I shall His power adore,
And sing the wonders of His grace
For evermore!'"

Take another representative man, Robert Newton,—greatly beloved,—all men's preacher. One of his closing utterances was,—

"Happy, if with my latest breath
 I may but gasp His name ;
 Preach Him to all, and cry in death,
 Behold, behold the Lamb !"

And another, of very different class—"Billy Dawson." He had gone to Lancashire to preach, when his Lord called him. With these words on his lips he suddenly departed :—

"Let me in life, in death,
 Thy steadfast truth declare ;
 And publish, with my latest breath,
 Thy love and guardian care."

The death-bed of a humble, self-distrusting woman I visited lately. She had suffered much from a constitutional and instinctive fear of dying, but at last was completely delivered from it. When she could only just speak, this sweet verse was repeated by her :—

"Jesus protects ! My fears begone !
 What can the Rock of Ages move ?
 Safe, in Thy arms, I lay me down,
 Thy everlasting arms of love."

Southey says that Wesleyan hymns have comforted more dying people than all other poetry put together. A safe testimony. Yea, and after death they are used, at least in church-yards, chapel-yards, cemeteries :—

"Give joy or grief ; give ease or pain ;
 Take life or friends away ;
 I come to meet them all again,
 In that eternal day."

4. *The influence of our hymns in other churches.*—During the days of Mr. Wesley they were largely incorporated with other books, and mutilated. Whitefield, Berridge, Madan, Thomas Maxfield, Dr. Bailey, Simpson (of Macclesfield), Mr. Fletcher,—all published hymn-books. Together, they contain 2,600 hymns ;—1,156 are from the Wesleys. These were, or had been, Mr. Wesley's friends. Toplady was an enemy—a bitter one ; yet his hymn-book was found to

contain 164 from the Wesleys. *Modern Episcopalians* have published many books. Some are small, yet how large a proportion of Wesleyan hymns they contain! Dr. Maltby's has 17; Mr. W. J. Hall's 32; Mr. Simeon's 35; Mr. Jeremiah Smith's 45; Mr. C. Kemble's 45; Mr. Bickersteth's 80; Mr. E. H. Bickersteth's 56. Mr. Mercer, once a Methodist, published the selection used at the special services in St. Paul's Cathedral, where thousands crowd the gates of that vast temple; more than one-third of the contents of that book are Wesleyan hymns. The Christian Knowledge Society's *little* popular Collection has 19 of our hymns. Even in the Tractarian Hymn-book a few are found, though not many. Montgomery, in his *Christian Psalmist*, has 93. Moreover, the *English Dissenters* have adopted our hymns largely. Williams and Boden's *Supplement to Watts* has 122 of them; Dr. Collyer's book has 26; Mr. Jay's 44; Lady Huntingdon's 58; Conder's *Congregational book* 62; and that of the *Congregational Union* 82. In Dr. Rippon's Collection, used by the *Baptists*, there are 27, and the same number in the *New Selection*. The *Scotch* have adopted them, though they are uncommonly chary as to such things. In a collection appended to the *Psalms* there are 22; in Dr. Wardlaw's Collection 26; and a considerable number in that of the *Synod of Relief*. The *Unitarian* book, prepared by Mr. Martineau, contains 52, though they are strangely altered; and even the *Mormonites* have got some of our hymns.* The only hymn-book I ever saw without a single Wesleyan hymn, is that of Joanna Southcott. Pullen, the follower of that revolting impostor, composed his hymns—such as they are—exclusively from her writings.† How marvellous the popu-

* *London Quarterly*, April, 1860.

† The Rev. David Denham, a Baptist minister, published a *Selection of Hymns* in 1837. He was the author of *The Sweet Home*, sacred lyric; "*Mid Scenes of Confusion and Creature Complaints*," on which his fame, as a poet, chiefly rests. He was very Calvinistic, and, in preparing his book, he seems studiously to have shunned the very name of Wesley. But the poor compiler has been fairly caught in his own drag, and in the meshes of his hyper-Calvinistic brother. Some of the most beautiful hymns of his choice, though credited to Toplady, have, alas! been demonstrated to be Charles

larity of our Hymn-book! "The little volume, once sold at a Brazier's house, in Little Britain," has now an influence in *all religious communities*. Yea, and with those "that are without," for, strange to say, our hymns have achieved a novel popularity in the streets. In "*The National Review*," a serio-comic writer has recently complained of a conspiracy formed between the march of intellect and policemen, to put down the ancient institution of the street-ballad. He laments that (except in a few old-established places), a good "broad-sheet" can scarcely now be seen. Wesley's Hymns have taken the place of it. One thing, however, gives this facetious writer something like hope:—that prize-fighting, crinoline, and Puseyism, have brought about a ballad-writing and ballad-singing revival. Sayers and Heenan have done a deal; so has Bryan King, of Whitechapel notoriety. The latter is thus immortalized:—

"Come all ye sporting parsons,
And listen to my song,
About the fight to save our souls,—
I'll not detain you long:
King Bryan, of St. George's,
He swears by all that's right,
In spite of all Whitechapel dogs,
He'll be a Puseyite!"

True it is, however, that our hymns have superseded the street-ballad in many places;—singing beggars finding them a profitable commodity. I was myself much affected, the other day, to hear the following on the lips of an old beggar man, in Dale End, Birmingham: he was blind and very infirm:—

"Jesus, vouchsafe a pitying ray?
Be Thou my Guide, be Thou my Way,

Wesley's. Moreover, the first four in the book (also marked "Toplady") were published, by Samuel Wesley, before Toplady was born.

Going from the hymn-books of this country to those of America, we find that the book of the Methodist Episcopal Church, North, contains 606 Wesleyan hymns; that of the Episcopal Church, South, 588; that of the Methodist Protestant Church (Baltimore) 202. Henry Ward Beecher's Plymouth Collection embodies 109; the Andover Sabbath Hymn-book 79.—*Quarterly Review* (American), July, 1860, p. 377.

To glorious happiness :
 Ah ! write Thy pardon on my heart,
 And, whensoever I hence depart,
 Let me depart in peace."

Who shall say that a good hymn, from the lips of a beggar in the streets, shall be altogether useless ? We know something of the crowing of a cock in relation to Peter's penitence ; and, one of my own friends, who has now some hundred members in his classes, was brought to reflection and tears, by means of two lines of a hymn, borne on the wings of the wind to his ears from the mouth of a singing street-beggar.

Stranger still, the public-houses have got our hymns. As a temptation, or a quietus to the conscience, or both, they are often sung on a Sunday, amidst drinking and smoking. Returning home, from the pulpit, a short time ago, and passing a large, brilliantly lighted, drinking-room, I was horrified to overhear those carousing Sabbath-breakers singing :

" A charge to keep I have,
 A God to glorify ;
 A never-dying soul to save,
 And fit it for the sky.
 To serve the present age,
 My calling to fulfil ;
 O may it all my powers engage,
 To do my Master's will."

What is not human nature capable of ! True it is, that Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. However, to use the language of a great authority on the subject :—
 " The most ardent admirer of the Wesleyan Hymn-book may be satisfied with its almost ubiquitous power and popularity." In the palace, and in the cottage of the poor man ; in mansions and mines ; in solemn temples ; in prisons and parish workhouses ; in streets and lanes of the city ; in the highways and hedges ; at home, abroad ; among savages and sages, bondmen and freemen ; black people, white people ;—everywhere it is found. It directs the vocal harmonies and

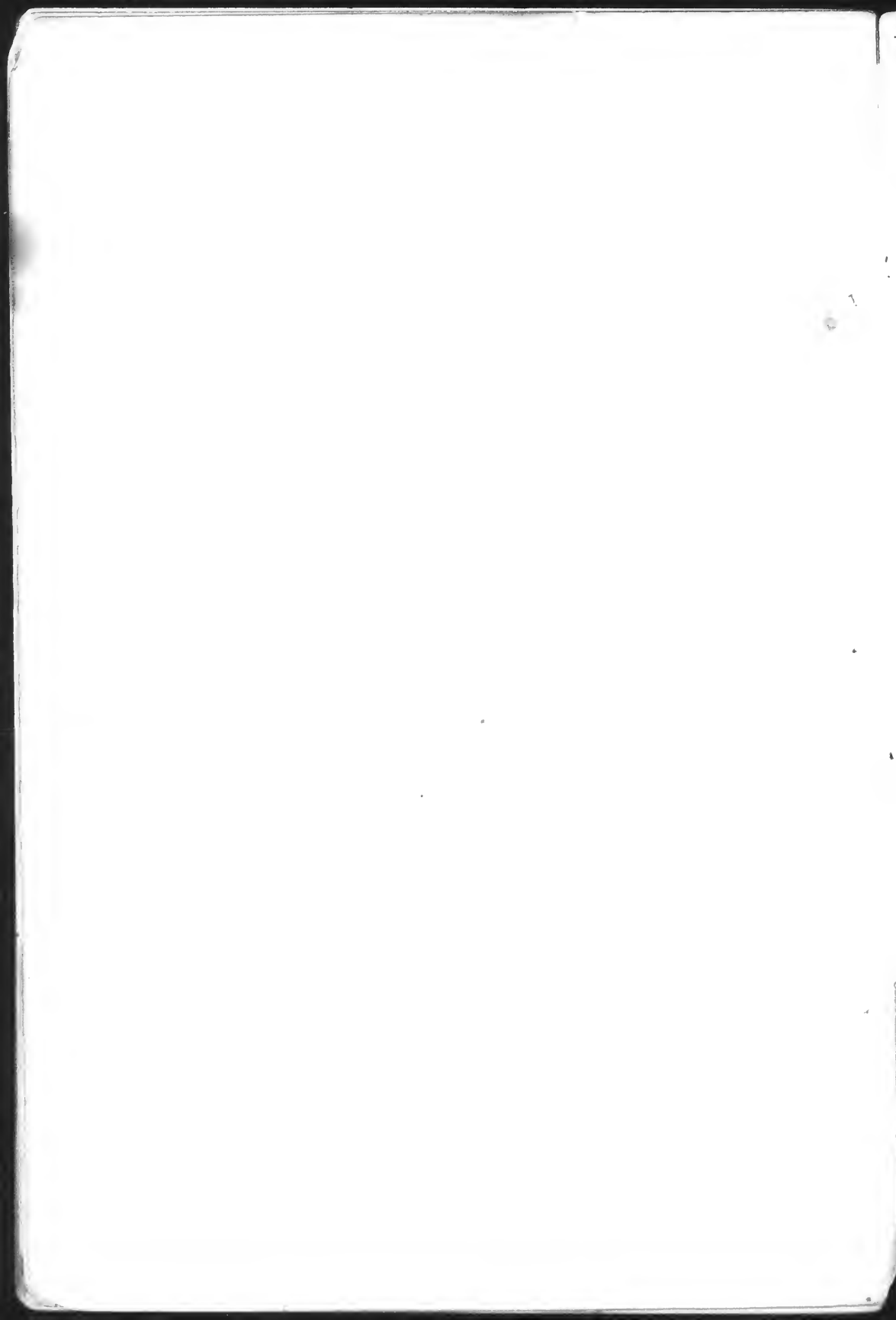
stimulates the praises of millions of souls in every clime ;
and it will do, until " the ransomed of the Lord return to
Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, when
they shall have joy and gladness, sorrow and sighing having
fed away."

" Come, ye that love the Lord,
And let your joys be known ;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
While ye surround His throne :
Let those refuse to sing,
Who never knew our God ;
But servants of the Heavenly King,
May speak their joys abroad.

" The God that rules on high,
That all the earth surveys ;
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And calms the roaring seas ;
This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our Love ;
He will send down His heavenly powers,
To carry us above."

" *Then let our songs abound,*
And every tear be dry ;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high."





APPENDIX.

COMPOSERS' NAMES.	HYMNS COMPOSED BY THEM, NUMERICALLY ARRANGED.
ADDISON	567, 592, 765.
BAKEWELL, John	633.
BRACKENBURY, R. C., Esq....	653—1st, 2nd, and 3rd verses, the re- mainder by C. WESLEY.
BULMER, Mrs. Agnes	737.
BUNTING, Rev. W. M.	748.
COWPER	559, 663.
DODDRIDGE, Dr.	582, 628, 651, 711, 714, 736, 739, 743, 744, 750.
DRYDEN... ..	654.
HART, Rev. Joseph	588.
KEN, Bishop	757, 758.
MERRICK, Rev. James	585.
MORE, Rev. Dr. Henry	456, 457.
OLIVERS, Rev. Thomas.....	669, 670, 671.
RHODES, Rev. Benjamin	637, 638.
STEELE, Miss	580, 722, 746.
STENNETT, Rev. Joseph	583.
TATE and BRADY	571, 584.
TOPLADY, Rev. Augustus M...	624.
UNKNOWN	560.
WATTS, Rev. Dr.	12, 41, 42, 213, 224, 225, 226, 263, 316, 540, 541, 553, 568, 569, 570, 573, 577, 578, 579, 581, 587, 589, 590, 593, 595, 596, 597, 599, 600, 612, 615, 620, 623, 634, 636, 640, 641, 646, 648, 652, 656, 659, 660, 664, 665, 672, 676, 678, 679, 680, 685, 695, 697, 698, 699, 701, 702, 716, 720, 721, 728, 730, 738, 741, 751, 769.

Methodism cannot but be interesting. It is a copy of the original prospectus for the publication of "The Large Book," and which was advertised on the cover of the Magazine for October, 1779 :—

"PROPOSALS FOR PRINTING

(BY SUBSCRIPTION)

A

COLLECTION

OF

HYMNS,

FOR THE USE OF THE PEOPLE CALLED

METHODISTS.

Intended to be used in all their Congregations.

CONDITIONS.

- I.—This Collection will contain about five hundred hymns, and upwards of four hundred pages.
- II.—It is now nearly ready for the press; and will be printed with all expedition.
- III.—The price is *three shillings*: half to be paid at the time of subscribing; the other half at the delivery of the book, *sewed*.
- IV.—Booksellers *only*, subscribing for six copies, shall have a seventh gratis."

These proposals will explain the following characteristic passage in a letter of Mr. Wesley, dated November, 1779, to Mr. John Mason, one of his newly-appointed "Assistants :"—

"One thing more I desire,—that you would read the proposals for the general Hymn-book in every society, and procure as many subscribers as you can.

"By your diligence and exactness in these particulars, I shall judge whether you are qualified to act as an Assistant or not.

"I am,

"Your affectionate Friend and Brother,

"JOHN WESLEY.

"Pray send me word, in January, how many subscriptions you have procured in your circuit."

Who shall estimate the number of times that John Wesley had looked on, read, and given out the hymns comprised in the "Collection" announced by this prospectus? Not long, however, after that work was completed, the eyes so long "undimmed," and "the natural force" so long "unabated," gave way. There are two appropriate but affecting records in his *Journal*, which we give, and in the latter of which we have, probably, Mr. W.'s last printed reference to the *Hymn-book*:—

"Wednesday, Dec. 10, (1788), and the following days,—I corrected my brother's posthumous poems; being short psalms (hymns) on the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. They make five volumes in quarto, containing eighteen or nineteen hundred pages.

"Monday, 15.—About this time I was reflecting on the gentle steps whereby age steals upon us. Four years ago my sight was as good as it was at five-and-twenty. I then began to observe that I did not see things quite so clear with my left eye as with my right; all objects appeared a little browner to that eye. I began next to find some difficulty in reading a small print by candle-light. A year after, I found it in reading such a print by day-light. In winter, 1786, I could not well read our four shilling HYMN-BOOK, unless with a large candle; the next year I could not read letters if wrote with a small or bad hand. Last winter a pearl appeared on my left eye, the sight of which grew exceeding dim. Thus are those 'that look out at the windows darkened:' one of the marks of old age. But I bless God, 'the grasshopper' is not 'a burden.' I am still capable of travelling; and my memory is much the same as it ever was; and so, I think, is my understanding."—*Wesley's Works*, vol. iv., p. 442.



NOTICES OF REVIEWS

Upon Two Lectures on the Wesleyan Hymn-book, by the Rev. Joseph Heaton

The literature of the Wesleyan Hymn-book is accumulating so rapidly, as to merit a more extended notice of it than we can give at the end of this review. In a future number the subject will receive fuller consideration. In the meantime, we have great pleasure in calling attention to Mr. Heaton's concise and admirable pamphlet. There is material enough in these sixty-eight pages to fill a goodly volume, and, if Mr. Heaton's readers are disposed to find any fault with him, it will be on the score of his almost lamentable brevity. The first lecture is devoted to brief and graphic sketches of the Poets of the Hymn-Book, and to those romantic incidents of its history which invest many of its beautiful hymns with undying interest. The second lecture treats of the excellences of the Hymn-book, and its influence. With great judgment and discrimination Mr. Heaton reviews its poetry; its evangelistic tone; its paraphrastic and expository value; the spirituality of its sentiments, and the diversity and fitness of its metrical construction. His style is clear, vigorous, and racy. The large fund of illustration he has gathered he uses with great effect. Over all is shed the glow of reverence and devotion.—From the *London Quarterly Review*, No. 38. Jan. 1863, p. 519.

What a mass of instruction and interest does the above title indicate. Here, within the compass of some sixty-four pages, we have biography, criticism, divinity, poetry, history, and archæology. The lectures were delivered to Wesleyan congregations in Birmingham, and are very properly, at the request of those who heard them, given to the public through the press. Any one, wishful to possess a fund of interesting intelligence regarding the Wesleyan Collection of Hymns, will do well to spend sixpence on these Lectures.—From the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, Dec., 1862.

The appearance of the two Lectures on the Wesleyan Hymn-book, by the Rev. Joseph Heaton, of Birmingham, in a new edition, marked fifth thousand, reminds us that we have too long omitted due notice of this very interesting and popular publication. Mr. Heaton's method is novel. He first turns biographer; presents his readers with short but lively sketches of the several authors whose works enrich the collections made by John Wesley, or the Supplement. He then turns critic, and points out, with much freedom and force, the beauties and excellences of the volume. His strictures are accompanied with illustrative dates and quotations, and display an extensive acquaintance with the subject, as well as an earnest and intelligent appreciation of the value of the Hymn-book. We do not wonder that these lectures excited much interest at the delivery, and have been extensively sold. They deserve to be yet more widely circulated, that Methodists may more intelligently, and therefore more profitably, use one of the best manuals of devotion which the world ever saw.—*Watchman*, Nov. 12, 1862.

Mr. Heaton's first lecture commences with a brief account of each of the twenty-four authors whose productions appear in our Hymn-book. Then follows a history of the book itself, and an explanation of its historic allusions, some of which are exceedingly interesting. The second lecture is critical, and is devoted to an examination of the poetic beauties, the evangelistic excellency, the

NOTICES OF REVIEWS.

didactic and expository element, and the spiritual element, discernible in the collection. The style is next discussed, with especial reference to its perspicuity, its metrical diversity, and its fitness for musical expression. The lecturer also touches upon the subject of hymn tunes, and gives some humorous illustrations of the nonsense into which our hymns are sometimes turned by the indiscriminate use of tunes which repeat, or which divide, a line of the verse. In his remarks upon the doctrinal, spiritual, and Connexional influence of the Hymn-book we can most cordially agree. The extent to which other communions and other collections of hymns are indebted to the Wesley hymnology is well illustrated in a clear and careful paragraph, which must have cost no little trouble in the preparation, and is proportionately valuable. These interesting lectures are agreeably diversified by anecdotes, and interspersed throughout with lively and apt remarks. They convey a great amount of information in an easy and pleasing style, and will form an excellent companion to the Hymn-book.—*Methodist Recorder*, Sept. 18, 1862.

These lectures do not, of course, attempt to give an extended history of the Hymn-book. They contain a large mass of *well arranged* information, which cannot be found elsewhere within the same compass, and they ought to be procured and read by every Methodist.—From the *Wesleyan Spectator*, Jan. 9, 1863 (now discontinued).

• All lovers of our incomparable Hymn-book will be charmed with the Rev. Joseph Heaton's two lectures on that book. It is accompanied with a tabulated appendix of the hymns, and their respective authors.—From the *Christian Miscellany*, Jan., 1863, p. 32.

Contains a great amount of very interesting and valuable information, well and briefly stated.—From the *Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine*, Dec., 1862.

Mr. Heaton is one of the Conference preachers now in Birmingham, and these lectures, published by request, were prepared for and delivered to the Methodist societies in that town. They are the most interesting and instructive papers of the kind we have yet met with.—From the *Wesleyan Times*, Oct. 20, 1863.

214
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